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THE FRENCH ARMY 1939-45 (1)

IAN SUMNER FRANÇOIS VAUVILLIER MIKE CHAPPELL

SERIES EDITOR: LEE JOHNSON

OSPREY MILITARY MEN-AT-ARMS 315

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THE ARMY OF 1939-40 & VICHY FRANCE

TEXT BY

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COLOUR PLATES

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OSPREY MILITARY

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to the 92,000 forgotten French soldiers who fell for their country in the spring of 1940.

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PV would particularly like to thank Jacques Sicard for his invaluable help in the drawing up of the detailed order of battle for 1940; IS would also like to thank his wife for all her help and encouragement. All photos, unless otherwise specified, are from the authors' collections.

Publisher's note

Readers may wish to study this title in conjunction with the following Osprey publications:

MAA 286 *The French Army 1914-18*
Campaign 3 *France 1940*
MAA 310 *The German Army 1939-45 (1) Blitzkrieg*
MAA 120 *Allied Commanders of World War II*

A second volume, devoted to the Free French and to the French Army of Liberation will appear shortly, offering a detailed account of material already outlined in MAA 169 *Resistance Warfare 1940-45* and MAA 238 *Foreign Volunteers of the Allied Forces 1939-45*.

TITLE PAGE **This Moroccan belongs to the Groupe Franc of an RTM, but, his face apart, nothing distinguishes him from a French unit. He wears a typical sheepskin over a reduced uniform which consists of a civilian pullover worn over the regulation 1936-pattern jersey, just visible at the wrist. The gloves are khaki wool, and the weapon is the FM24/29.**

THE FRENCH ARMY 1939-45

(1) THE ARMY OF 1939-40 AND VICHY FRANCE

The French Army of 1939 was considered by contemporaries to be the strongest army in the world at that time. In fact, as the events of the next ten months soon revealed, the Army was riddled with fatal weaknesses. Many of these stemmed from the attitudes prevailing in the French High Command at the end of the First World War. Under Marshal Pétain (a general renowned for his care with men's lives) they were determined that the nation should never again endure such a bloodbath. They had also to evolve a strategy that took account of a predicted shortage of manpower, the so-called 'empty classes'. This was the result of a fall in the birth rate, itself the inevitable consequence of the high level of casualties during the First War. Each of the classes called up in the years between 1935 and 1939 was some 140,000 men under strength. The French therefore adopted a defensive policy. Noting both the general success of the forts around Verdun and the efficacy of the deep dug-outs constructed by the Germans on the Western Front, the High Command evolved a plan based on the construction of a permanently fortified line along the Franco-German frontier – a line subsequently named after the Minister of War, André Maginot.

For a decade and a half the Maginot Line dominated French tactical

'The strongest army in the world ...' Exactly 20 years after the end of the First World War, on 11 November 1938, the 46e Régiment d'Infanterie parade down the Champs Elysées, wearing the 1920/35 piped uniform, *capote* collars worn open, and the first issue 1935-pattern equipment. However, the helmets are still the old 1915 Adrian type, repainted in khaki. At the head of the regiment march the *adjudants* and *sous-lieutenants*, wearing the 1932-pattern *manteau*. All ranks display the regimental badge.

Accompanied by his staff and the Minister of War, Jean Fabry, General Gamelin (right foreground), named commander-in-chief in 1935, attends the major manoeuvres in September of that year. The khaki uniform worn by generals was the same as that worn by other officers, except for the képi, the buttons, the silver stars worn on the sleeve, and the absence of collar patches. In addition, the shoulder tabs on the *vareuse* were embroidered in gold.

thinking, and from 1930 to 1936 absorbed the bulk of the country's military spending. However, such a largely defensive strategy did not necessarily imply a totally passive outlook. The Maginot Line only covered the Franco-German border, principally for reasons of cost. The High Command thought it preferable to move the defensive line further north, to the Belgian-German frontier; this would shorten its length and would include Belgium (an ally until 1936) in the overall plan. Most importantly, any war, and the destruction that would follow in its wake, would take place far from French territory. From the late 1920s it became clear that the mechanisation of at least part of the Army was vital.

It was only in the second half of the 1930s, however, that French rearmament began in earnest, following parliamentary approval in September 1936 for the 14 million FF Daladier Programme. Unfortunately, this period was also one of great social unrest in France and it was not until the second half of 1938 that production lines finally began to work at full capacity. In the event even this could do nothing to alter the outcome of a 'lightning war' based on novel tactical thinking, against which the only successful counter would be natural geographical features: the barrier of the English Channel or the enormous spaces of the Russian steppes. It was France's misfortune to have neither.

The operations of 1940, up to Dunkirk, are summarised in Campaign 3 *France 1940*. The words of a German soldier provide an apposite summary of events after 5 June when the French Army was fighting against odds of three to one on the Weygand Line: 'In the ruins of the villages, the French resisted to the last man ... Here, on the Aisne, the French regiments were determined to defend every last route to the heart of France, in a battle that would decide the fate of their country. The *poilu* had done his duty.'

1 - Higher Formations, May-June 1940

Abbreviation/French full designation	*Translation/Observations*
CA *(corps d'armée)*	Army Corps
CAC *(-colonial)*	Colonial Corps (one, *not numbered*)
CAF *(-de forteresse)*	Fortress Army Corps
CC *(corps de cavalerie)*	Cavalry Corps (one, *not numbered*)
GC *(groupement cuirassé)*	Armoured Group (*several Arm. Div.*)
DI *(division d'infanterie)*	Infantry Division
DIM *(-motorisée)*	Motorised Infantry Division
DIF *(-de forteresse)*	Fortress Inf. Div. (*variable organisation*)
DINA *(-nord-africaine)*	North African (Active) Infantry Division
DIA *(-d'Afrique)*	Africa (*North Afr. Reserve*) Inf. Division
DM *(division marocaine)*	Moroccan (Infantry) Division
DIC *(-coloniale)*	Colonial Infantry Division
DIP *(-polonaise)*	Polish Infantry Division
DLCh *(division légère de chasseurs)*	Light (*2 demi-brigades*) Chasseurs Division
DLI *(division légère d'infanterie)*	Light (*2 regiments*) Infantry Division
DCR *(division cuirassée)*	Armoured Division
DLM *(division légère mécanique)*	Light (*4 regiments*) Mechanised Division
DLC *(division légère de cavalerie)*	Light (*4 regiments*) Cavalry Division
BC *(brigade de cavalerie)*	Cavalry Brigade (*2 horsed regiments*)
BS *(brigade de spahis)*	Spahis Brigade (*2 horsed regiments*)
RF *(région fortifiée)*	Fortified Region (+ *geographical name*)
SD *(secteur défensif)*	Defensive Sector (+ *geographical name*)
SF *(secteur fortifié)*	Fortified Sector (+ *geographical name*)

BELOW RIGHT **The end of Alpine manoeuvres in the Briançonnais, September 1938. Carrying their mountain packs, and with a jonquil yellow star on their sleeves, the ski-scouts of the 11e Bataillon de Chasseurs Alpins march past at the head of the battalion, together with their superb St Bernard dogs. The chasseurs' blue uniform is as per regulation, and consists of a bluish iron grey 1920-pattern *vareuse* (with seven buttons), worn with the battalion's yellow and green *fourragère*. The equipment of the ski-scouts does not include braces or the dorsal cartridge pouch.**

THE ORGANISATION OF THE ARMY IN 1939-40

General Gamelin was the commander-in-chief, whilst the main front, the north-east, was under the command of General Georges. The French had mobilised three Army Groups (GA) there, numbered from 1 to 3 (see Table 3 pp.7-9). GA1, under General Billotte, contained five armies, including the British Expeditionary Force (BEF), and formed the Allied left wing, with the objective of helping Belgium and the Netherlands. General Prételat's GA2 (three armies) was strung out along the Maginot Line, while General Besson's GA3 (two armies) was intended to deter any German attack through Switzerland.

Armies, Corps and Infantry Divisions

Each Army, numbered from 1 to 9, plus the Army of the Alps, had only a small number of troops directly under its command (several tank battalions and pioneer regiments). Each army corps could deploy four groups of horse-drawn heavy artillery (with 24 x 105L13, and 24 x 155L); three groups in motorised corps (with 12 x 105L36, 12 x 105L13, and 12 x 155GPF); a pioneer regiment and a reconnaissance group, plus engineers and supporting services.

2 - Infantry units, May-June 1940

Abbreviation/French full designation	*Translation/Observations*
METROPOLITAN INFANTRY	
RI *(régiment d'infanterie)*	*(Line)* Infantry Regiment
RIA *(-alpine)*	Alpine Infantry Regiment
RIF *(-de forteresse)*	Fortress Infantry Regiment
DBI *(demi-brigade** d'infanterie)*	Infantry Demi-brigade**
DBA *(demi-brigade** alpine)*	Alpine Demi-brigade**
DBAF *(demi-brigade* alpine de forteresse)*	3 battalions (BAF) each
BAF *(bataillon alpin de forteresse)*	Alpine Fortress Battalion
RP *(régiment de pionniers)*	Pioneer Regiment
RPC *(-coloniaux)*	Colonial Pioneer Regiment
BPC *(bataillon de pionniers coloniaux)*	*(Senegalese)* Pioneer Battalion
BM *(bataillon de mitrailleurs)*	Machine-Gun Battalion
BMM *(-motorisés)*	Machine-Gun Motor Battalion
DBCP/A *(demi-brigade* de CP/A)*	3 battalions (BCP/A) each
BCP *(bataillon de chasseurs à pied)*	Chasseurs à pied Battalion
BCA *(bataillon de chasseurs alpins)*	Alpine Chasseurs Battalion
BCHM *(btn de chas. de haute montagne)*	High mountain *(attached to a DBAF)*
DBCPyr *(demi-brigade* de CPyr)*	2 battalions (BCPyr) each
BCPyr *(btn de chasseurs pyrénéens)*	Pyrenean Chasseurs Battalion
(NORTH) AFRICA INFANTRY	
RZ *(régiment de zouaves)*	(French North-African) Regiment
RTA *(régiment de tirailleurs algériens)*	Algerian Tirailleurs Regiment
RTT *(régiment de tirailleurs tunisiens)*	Tunisian Tirailleurs Regiment
RTM *(régiment de tirailleurs marocains)*	Moroccan Tirailleurs Regiment
DBNA *(demi-brigade** nord-africaine)*	North-African Demi-brigade**
DBIL *(demi-brigade* d'infanterie légère)*	variable number of battalions
BIL *(bataillon d'infanterie légère)*	Light Infantry Battalion
BILA *(-d'Afrique)*	African Light Infantry Battalion
REI *(régiment étranger d'infanterie)*	Foreign Infantry Regiment
DBLE *(demi-bde** de légion étrangère)*	Foreign Legion Demi-brigade**
RMVE *(rgt de marche de volontaires étrangers)*	Foreign Volunteers Provisional Rgt
BVE *(bataillon de volontaires étrangers)*	Foreign Volunteers Battalion
COLONIAL INFANTRY	
RIC *(régiment d'infanterie coloniale)*	*(French)* Colonial Inf. Regiment
RICM *(-du Maroc)*	not numbered
RICMS *(-mixte sénégalais)*	mixed: 1 Fr. btn + 2 Senegalese btns
RMIC *(rgt mixte d'infanterie coloniale)*	id., with Senegalese or Indochinese
RMIC *(rgt de mitrailleurs d'inf. col.)*	MG Rgt *(4[e] and 51[e] only)*
DBMC *(demi-bde** de mitrailleurs coloniaux)*	MG unit, Malagasy personnel
BMIC *(btn de mitrailleurs d'inf. col.)*	Colonial Machine Gun Battalion
BAICM *(btn autonome d'inf. col. de marche)*	Indep. Colonial Provisional Btn
RTS *(régiment de tirailleurs sénégalais)*	Senegalese Tirailleurs Regiment
BTS *(btn de tirailleurs sénégalais)*	Senegalese Tirailleurs Battalion
RMM *(régiment mixte malgache)*	Mixed *(French-)*Malagasy Rgt
BTM *(btn de tirailleurs malgaches)*	Malagasy Tirailleurs Battalion
RTA *(régiment de tirailleurs annamites)*	Annamese Tirailleurs Rgt (not numbered)
RTC *(régiment de tirailleurs cambodgiens)*	Cambodian Tirailleurs Rgt (not numbered)
RTT *(régiment de tirailleurs tonkinois)*	Tonkinese Tirailleurs Regiment
BTMSA *(btn de tir.montagnards du Sud-Annam)*	South-Annam Mountain Tirailleurs Btn

Notes

'The name demi-brigade (half-brigade) was used instead of regiment when its constituent battalions were permanently independent ('I') or came from various regiments ('/"). In the OBs pp.7-10, demi-brigades with independent battalions are indicated: '2[e] [3[e], 4[e]] DBCPyr' which means '2[e] DBCPyr, comprising 3[e] and 4[e] BCPyr'.

The 6e Régiment de Tirailleurs Marocains, stationed at Verdun, returning from a review, 25 May 1939. In warm weather, officers and men paraded wearing the *vareuse*. The tirailleurs, who had just received the brand new 1935 mod. 37 equipment, are wearing the *chèche* wound into a turban, and an Other Ranks' 1920-pattern *vareuse*, with seven buttons. The *fourragère* is sky blue and red, the colours of the Croix de Guerre TOE *(théâtres d'opérations extérieurs)*, in honour of the regiment's excellent performance in Morocco and the Levant during the 1920s.

The basic pawn in the hands of the High Command was the infantry division (DI), which contained around 500 officers and 17,000 men of all arms. Despite differences of name, all infantry divisions had, in theory, the same basic structure, with three regiments (or nine battalions) of infantry; an anti-tank company (with 12 x 25mm anti-tank guns) crewed by the infantry; one pioneer company; two artillery regiments (five groups, of which two were heavy, see Artillery p.15); an anti-tank battery (eight 47mm weapons); a reconnaissance group (see Cavalry p.13); two companies of engineers; two signals companies; two transport companies; a medical group; and a supply group. However, certain divisions of the B Reserve had only one regiment of artillery (four groups, only one of which was heavy), and laboured under shortages of equipment, notably in anti-tank weapons.

Three 'light infantry divisions' (DLI), with only six battalions and a single artillery group each, were formed for the Norway Expedition. All the new infantry formations created at the end of May 1940 with the debris of troops pushed back at Sedan or evacuated from Dunkirk were also of this type, with the addition of a second 75mm artillery group and a reconnaissance squadron.

Infantry

The campaign of 1939-40 was the last to employ the French infantry on a grand scale. Yet the forces deployed were no more than a shadow of those mobilised for the previous war: on 10 May 1940 only 215 metropolitan infantry regiments of various types took the field, compared with the 350 mobilised in August 1914.

Each infantry regiment was similar in strength, containing around 80 officers and 3,000 men in three battalions. The regiments, however, fell into a number of different categories. The peacetime army consisted of 64 line regiments: 24 so-called 'normal' regiments, serving in infantry divisions, 20 motorised regiments in the DIMs, eight classed as Alpine troops, and 12 'Fortress Infantry' Regiments (RIF) serving in the Maginot Line. There were also three *demi-brigades* of Alpine Fortress infantry (seven independent battalions in total) facing Italy.

3 - French Army Order of Battle, North-East Front, 10 May 1940

Key to abbreviations, see pp. 4-16

Formation	*General (or C.O.)*	*Infantry (or main body)*	*Recce*	*Artillery*	*Mobilisation status, other comments*
RÉSERVE DU GRAND QUARTIER GÉNÉRAL (GQG), Supreme Head-Quarters Reserve, **General Gamelin**					
21e CA	Flavigny	621e RP	14e GRCA	109e RALH	
23e CA	Germain	623e RPC *(Senegalese)*	19e GRCA	123e RALA	
3e DIM	Bertin-Boussu	51e, 67e, 91e RI	6e GRDIm	42e RAD, 242e RALD	Active, motorised
10e DI	Aymé	5e, 24e, 46e RI	15e GRDI	32e RAD, 232e RALD	Active
14e DI	de Lattre de Tassigny	35e, 152e RI, 3e [2e, 21e, 31e] DBCP	25e GRDI	4e RAD, 204e RALD	Active
23e DI	Jeannel	32e, 107e, 126e RI	18e GRDI	41e RAD, 241e RALD	Active
28e DI	Lestien	97e, 99e RIA, 25e [7e, 27e, 47e] DBCA	22e GRDI	2e RAM, 202e RALD	Reserve A
29e DI	Gérodias	3e, 112e RIA, 6e [24e, 25e, 65e] DBCA	34e GRDI	94e RAM, 294e RALD	Active
36e DI	Aublet	14e, 18e, 57e RI	39e GRDI	24e RAD, 224e RALD	Active
43e DI	Vermillat	158e RI, 4e [1er, 10e, 29e] DBCP, 3e RTM	32e GRDI	12e RAD, 212e RALD	Active
1re DINA	Tarrit	27e RTA, 28e RTT, 5e RTM	91e GRDI	54e RANA, 254e RALNA	Active
7e DINA	Barré	20e RTT, 31e RTA, 10e RTM	97e GRDI	81e RANA, 281e RALD	Formed 16 March 40
5e DIC	Sechet	22e RIC, 44e, 53e RICMS	75e GRDI	21e RACMM, 221e RALCMM	Reserve A
7e DIC	Noiret	7e RIC, 33e, 57e RICMS	77e GRDI	32e RACMM, 232e RALCMM	Reserve A
2e DIP	Prugar Ketling	4e, 5e, 6e RI polonais *(Polish Infantry)*	2e GRDI pol.	2e, 202e RA polonais	Formed from Mar. 40, Polish troops
1er GC	Keller	—	—	—	
2e DCR	Bruche	*B Tks:* 8e, 15e - *H Tks:* 14e, 27e BCC - *Inf.:* 17e BCP	—	309e RATTT	Formed 16 January 40, armoured
3e DCR	Brocard	*B Tks:* 41e, 49e - *H Tks:* 42e, 45e BCC - *Inf.:* 16e BCP	—	319e RATTT	Formed 20 March 40, armoured
From the North Sea to the Swiss border **THÉÂTRE D'OPÉRATIONS DU NORD-EST (TONE), General Georges**					
68e DI *(Northern Coast)*	Beaufrère	224e, 225e, 341e RI	59e GRDI	89e RAD, 289e RALD *(+ I/307e RAP attached)*	Formed 16 Jan. 40
GROUPE D'ARMÉES 1, General Billotte *(also including the British Expeditionary Force)*					
7e ARMÉE	**Giraud**	407e, 417e, 427e, 441e, 442e RP - R *Tks:* 9e, 22e BCC	—	—	
SF Flandres	Barthélémy	Training Btns + 272e DBI *(+ Regional units)*	—	105e–115e Bies I/161e RAP	
1re DLM	Picard	*Cav. Tks:* 4e RC, 18e RD - *Inf.:* 4e RDP	6e RC	74e RATTT	Active, mechanised
21e DI	Lanquetot	48e, 65e, 137e RI	27e GRDI	35e RAD, 255e RALD	Active
60e DI	Deslaurens	241e, 270e, 271e RI	68e GRDI	50e RAMD *(+ II/307e RAP attached)*	Reserve B
4e DI *(GQG reserve)*	Musse	45e, 72e, 124e RI *(+ 2e BM later)*	12e GRDI	29e RAD, 229e RALD	Reserve A
1er CA	Sciard	601e RP	2e GRCAm	101e RALA	
25e DIM	Molinié	38e, 92e, 121e RI	5e GRDIm	16e RAD, 216e RALD *(+ III/402e, IV/403e RADCA)*	Active, mot.
16e CA	Fagalde	616e RP	18e GRCA	115e RALH	
9e DIM	Didelet	13e, 95e, 131e RI	2e GRDIm	30e RADT, 230e RALDT	Active, motorised
1re ARMÉE	**Blanchard**	401e, 411e, 421e, 434e RP - R *Tks:* 35e, 39e BCC - *H Tks:* 13e, 38e BCC			
SF Escaut	Hanaut	54e RIF *(+ Regional units)*	—	I/161e RAP	
32e DI *(Army reserve)*	*(Col.)* Sevez	7e, 122e, 143e RI	38e GRDI	3e RAD, 203e RALD	
1re DCR *(Army reserve)*	Bruneau	*B Tks:* 28e, 37e - *H Tks:* 25e, 26e BCC - *Inf.:* 5e BCP	—	305e RATTT	Formed 16 January 40, armoured
Corps de Cavalerie	Prioux	*(54e, 56e BMM attached)*	—	329e RA tracté	
2e DLM	Bougrain	*Cav. Tks:* 13e, 29e RD - *Inf.:* 1er RDP	8e RC	71e RATTT *(+ IV/405e RADCA)*	Active, mechanised
3e DLM	Langlois	*Cav. Tks:* 1er, 2e RC - *Inf.:* 11e RDP	12e RC	76e RATTT *(+ V/402e RADCA)*	Formed 1st Feb. 40, mechanised
3e CA	de Fornel de la Laurencie	603e RP	6e GRCA	105e RALH	
1re DIM	de Camas	1er, 43e, 110e RI	7e GRDIm	15e RAD, 215e RALD	Active, motorised
2e DINA	Dame	11e RZ, 13e, 22e RTA	92e GRDI	40e RANA, 240e RALNA	
4e CA	Aymes	604e RP	7e GRCA	106e RALH	
15e DIM	Juin	4e, 27e, 134e RI	4e GRDIm	1er RAD, 201e RALD	Active, motorised
1re DM	Mellier	1er, 2e, 7e RTM	80e GRDI	64e RAA, 264e RALD	
5e CA	Altmayer	605e RP *(+ 1er BM attached)*	3e GRCAm	104e RALA	
101e DIF	Béjard	84e, 87e RIF	—	II+III/161e RAP	Ex-SF Maubeuge (16 March 40)
12e DIM	*(Col.)* Blanchon	106e, 150e RI, 8e RZ	3e GRDIm	25e RAD, 225e RALD	Active
5e DINA	Agliany	14e RZ, 24e RTT, 6e RTM	95e GRDI	22e RAC, 222e RALC	
9e ARMÉE	**Corap**	445e, 446e RP, 481e RPC - R *Tks:* 6e, 32e BCC - *FT Tks:* 33e BCC			
1re DLC	d'Arras	*Horse:* 19e RD, 1er RCh - *Inf.:* 5e RDP	1er RAM	75e RATTT *(+ III/405e RADCA)*	Active, ex-1re DC, horse/mech.
4e DLC	Barbe	*Horse:* 8e, 31e RD - *Inf.:* 14e RDP	4e RAM	77e RATTT	Formed 10 Feb. 40, horse/mech.
3e BS	*(Col.)* Marc	*Horse:* 2e RSA, 2e RSM	—	—	Active, from North Africa (Nov. 39)
4e DINA	Sancelme	13e RZ, 23e, 25e RTA	94e GRDI	33e RANA, 233e RALNA	Active
53e DI	Etcheberrigaray	208e, 239e, 329e RI	66e GRDI	22e RAD, 222e RALD	Reserve B
11e CA	Martin	611e RP	17e GRCA	111e RALHC	
18e DI	Duffet	66e, 77e, 125e RI	30e GRDI	19e RAD, 219e RALD *(+ 308e RAP attached)*	Reserve A
22e DI	Béziers-Lafosse	19e, 62e, 116e RI	24e GRDI	18e RAD, 218e RALD	Reserve A
2e CA	Bouffet	602e RP	1er GRCAm	102e RALA	
5e DIM	Boucher	8e, 39e, 129e RI	1er GRDIm	11e RAD, 211e RALD	Active, motorised
41e CAF	Libaud	*(402e RP, 482e RPC attached)*	—	*(146e RALH attached)*	
102e DIF	Portzert	148e RIF, 3e BM, 42e, 52e DBMC	—	160e RAP *(+ I-II/391e RAT att.)*	Ex-SD Ardennes (1st Jan. 40)
61e DI	Lhéritier	248e, 265e, 337e RI	58e GRDI	51e RAMD *(+ III/391e RAT attached)*	Reserve B
2e ARMÉE	**Huntziger**	412e, 422e, 444e RP - R *Tks:* 3e BCC - *FCM Tks:* 4e, 7e BCC		—	—
SF Montmédy	Burtaire	132e, 136e, 147e, 155e RIF	—	99e RAMFH, I/169e RAP	
2e DLC	Berniquet	*Horse:* 5e RC, 18e RCh - *Inf.:* 3e RDP	2e RAM	73e RATTT	Active, ex-2e DC, horse/mech.
5e DLC	Chanoine	*Horse:* 11e RC, 12e RCh - *Inf.:* 15e RDP	5e RAM	78e RATTT	Formed 10 Feb. 40, horse/mech.
1re BC	Gailliard	*Horse:* 1er RH, 8e RCh	—	—	Active, from ex-1re DC
71e DI *(Army reserve)*	Baudet	120e, 205e, 246e RI	60e GRDI	38e RAMD	Reserve B
10e CA	Grandsard	610e RP	12e GRCA	110e RALHC *(+ III/145e RALH, III/185e RALT att.)*	
55e DI	Lafontaine	213e, 295e, 331e RI *(+ 11e BM attached)*	64e GRDI	45e RAMD	Reserve B
3e DINA	*(Col.)* Mast	12e RZ, 14e, 15e RTA	93e GRDI	20e RANA, 220e RALNA	Active
18e CA	Rochard	618e RP	16e GRCA	118e RALH *(+ I-II/145e RALH, I-IV/185e RALT att.)*	
4re DI	Bridoux	101e, 103e, 104e RI *(+ 4e BM attached)*	36e GRDI	13e RAD, 213e RALD *(+I/311e RAP attached)*	Reserve A
1re DIC	Roucaud	3e RIC, 12e, 14e *(mixed)* RTS	71e GRDI	1er RAC, 201e RALC	Active
3e DIC	Falvy	1er, 21e, 23e RIC	73e GRDI	3e RAC, 203e RALC *(+II-III/311e RAP attached)*	Active

Formation	General (or C.O.)	Infantry (or main body)	Recce	Artillery	Mobilisation status, other comments
GROUPE D'ARMEES 2, General Prételat					
87e DIA	Barbeyrac de St-Maurice	9e RZ, 17e, 18e RTA	87e GRDI	87e RAA, 287e RALD	Reserve A, from North Africa (Nov. 39)
4e DIC	de Bazelaire de Ruppière	2e RIC, 16e, 24e RTS	74e GRDI	12e RAC, 212e RALC	Active
3e ARMÉE	**Condé**	403e, 413e, 423e, 432e RP - *FT Tanks:* 29e, 30e BCC *R Tks:* 5e, 12e, 23e, 43e BCC - *2C Tks:* 51e BCC	—	165e RALGP	
3e DLC	Petiet	*Horse:* 6e RD, 4e RH - *Inf.:* 2e RDP	3e RAM (+ 45e GRRF)	72e RATTT	Active, ex-3e DC, horse/mech.
1re BS	*(Col.)* Jouffrault	*Horse:* 6e RSA, 4e RSM	—	—	
7e DI	Hupel	93e, 102e, 130e RI	40e GRDI	31e RAD, 231e RALD	Reserve A
8e DI	Dody	142e, 237e RI, 12e REI	42e GRDI	82e RANA, 282e RALD	Formed 1st April 40
6e DINA	de Verdilhac	21e RTA, 9e RTM, 11e REI	96e GRDI	6e RANA, 206e RALNA	Formed 1st Nov. 39
6e DI *(Army reserve)*	Lucien	36e, 74e, 119e RI	13e GRDI	43e RAD, 243e RALD	Reserve A
6e DIC *(Army reserve)*	Carles	5e, 6e RICMS, 43e RIC	76e GRDI	23e RACMM, 223e RALCMM	Reserve A
24e CA	Fougère	624e RP	25e GRCA	124e RALA *(+I/143e RALH attached)*	
51e DI	Boell	100e, 201e, 310e RI	70e GRDI	27e RAD, 227e RALD	Reserve B
42e CAF	Sivot	128e, 139e, 149e RIF, IV/460e RP	—	46e RARF, 152e RAP *(+ 143e RALH, I/374e RALVF attached)*	Ex-RF Metz + SF Crusnes (23 March 40)
20e DI	Corbe	2e, 47e, 115e RI *(+ 52e BMM attached)*	31e GRDI	7e RAD, 207e RALD	Reserve A
58e DI	Perraud	204e, 227e, 334e RI	61e GRDI	48e RAD, 248e RALD	Reserve B
CA Colonial	Freydenberg	622e RP	22e GRCA	11e RALHC	*(also including UK 51st Highland Div.)*
SF Thionville	Poisot	167e, 168e, 169e RIF, III/460e RP	—	70e RAMF, 151e RAP	Reserve A
2e DI	Klopfenstein	33e, 73e, 127e RI	11e GRDI	34e RAD, 234e RALD	Reserve A
56e DI	de Mierry	294e, 306e, 332e RI	63e GRDI	26e RAD, 226e RALD	Reserve B
6e CA	Loizeau	606e RP *(+ 53e, 57e BMM attached)*	8e GRCA	103e RALA	
SF Boulay	*(Col.)* Besse	161e, 162e, 164e RIF, II/460e RP	*(44e GRRF)*	23e RARF, 153e RAP	Reserve A
26e DI	Bonnassieux	86e, 98e, 105e RI	14e GRDI	36e RAD, 236e RALD *(+ III/141e RALH)*	Reserve A
42e DI	Keller	80e RIA, 94e, 151e RI	37e GRDI	61e RAD, 261e RALD *(+I/153e RAP attached)*	Active
4e ARMÉE	**Réquin**	404e, 414e, 424e, 431e, 433e, 437e RP - *FT Tanks:* 3/11e BCC *R Tks:* 10e, 20e, 24e BCC	—	—	
1re DIP *(Army reserve)*	Duch	1er, 2e, 3e RI polonais *(Polish Infantry)*	1er GRDI pol.	1er, 201e RA polonais	Formed from Oct.39, Polish troops
45e DI *(Army reserve)*	Roux	31e, 85e, 113e RI	33e GRDI	55e RAD, 255e RALD	Reserve A
9e CA	Laure	609e RP	11e GRCA	121e RALH *(+ 301e RAP attached)*	
SF Faulquemont	de Girval	69e, 82e , 146e, 156e, 160e RIF, I/460e RP	—	39e RARF, 163e RAP, III/153e RA	Reserve A
11e DI	Arlabosse	26e, 170e RI, 1re [8e, 30e, 61e] DBCP	16e GRDI	8e RAD, 208e RALD *(+ 304e RAP attached)*	Active
47e DI	Mendras	44e, 109e RI, 23e [42e, 44e, 71e] DBCP *(+ 5e BM attached)*	35e GRDI	5e RAD, 205e RALD *(+ II/301e RAP attached)*	Reserve A
20e CA	Hubert	620e RP *(+ 59e BMM attached)*	15e GRCA	120e RALA *(+ 310e RACP attached)*	
SF Sarre	*(Col.)* Dagnan	133e, 174e RIF, 41e, 51e RMIC	—	49e RARF, 166e RAP	Ex-SD Sarre (15 March 40)
52e DI	Echard	291e, 348e RI, 41e [88e, 96e, 110e] DBCP	—	17e RAD, 217e RALD	Reserve B
82e DIA	Armingeat	1er RZ, 6e RTA, 4e RTM	82e GRDI	66e RAA, 266e RALD	Active, from North Africa (Sept. 39)
5e ARMÉE	**Bourret**	405e, 415e, 425e, 436e, 439e RP - *FT Tanks:* 31e BCC *R Tks:* 1er, 2e, 21e, 34e BCC - *D Tks:* 19e BCC	—	—	
44e DI	Boissau	6e RI, 173e DBA, 26e [22e, 62e, 64e] DBCA	41e GRDI	91e RAD, 291e RALD	Formed 1st March 40
8e CA	Frère	608e RP	10e GRCA	108e RALA *(+ II/144e RALH, 173e RALGP, XI-XIV/187e RALT att.)*	
SF Rohrbach	Chastanet	37e, 153e, 166e RIF	—	59e RARF, 150e RAP	Reserve A
24e DI	Voirin	50e, 63e, 78e RI	28e GRDI	21e RAD, 221e RALD *(+ 315e RAP attached)*	Reserve A
31e DI	Vauthier	15e, 81e, 96e RIA *(+ 55e BMM attached)*	23e GRDI	56e RAD, 256e RALD	Reserve A
43e CAF	Lescanne	154e, 165e RIF, V/400e RP	*(46e GRRF att.)*	60e RARF, 168e RAP	Ex-RF Lauter + SF Vosges (5 March 40)
30e DI	Duron	49e RI, 55e RIA, 22e [18e, 23e, 60e] DBCA	26e GRDI	42e RAC, 242e RALC	Reserve A
12e CA	Dentz	612e RP	24e GRCA	112e RALH *(+ 144e RALH, XII-XIII/187e, III-IV/191e RALT att.)*	
SF Haguenau	*(Col.)* Regard	22e, 23e, 68e, 70e, 79e RIF, VI/400e RP	—	69e RARF, 156e RAP	Reserve A
16e DI	Mordant	29e, 56e, 89e RI	19e GRDI	37e RAD, 237e RALD	Reserve A
35e DI	Decharme	11e, 123e RI, 21e RMVE	29e GRDI	14e RAD, 214e RALD	Reserve A
70e DI	François	223e, 279e RI, 44e [81e, 90e, 109e] DBCP	51e GRDI	68e RAD, 268e RALD	Reserve B
17e CA	Noël	617e RP	13e GRCA	117e RALH *(+ I-II/191e RALT att.)*	
103e DIF	Renondeau	34e, 172e RIF, 226e RI	—	155e RAP *(+ 312e RAP attached)*	Ex-SF Bas-Rhin (5 March 40)
62e DI	Sarreaourse de la Guillonnière	250e, 307e, 326e RI	57e GRDI	52e RAMD	Reserve B
GROUPE D'ARMEES 3, General Besson					
8e ARMÉE	**Garchery**	408e, 418e, 428e, 443e RP *FT Tks:* 18e, 36e BCC - *R Tks:* 16e, 17e BCC	—	—	
13e CA	Misserey	613e RP	23e GRCA	116e RALH *(+ 197e RALT, 316e RAP attached)*	
104e DIF	Cousse	28e, 42e RIF, 242e RI *(+ 5e [9e, 10e] DBCPyr att.)*	—	I/170e RAP	Ex-SF Colmar (16 March 40)
105e DIF	Didio	10e RIF *(+ 371e RI, 7e, 8e BM attached)*	—	II/159e RAP	Ex-SF Mulhouse (16 March 40)
54e DI	Coradin	302e, 317e, 330e RI	—	44e RAMD	Reserve B
19e DI *(GQG reserve)*	Toussaint	41e, 117e RI, 22e RMVE	21e GRDI	10e RAD, 210e RALD	Active
44e CAF	Tence	—	—	VI/159e RAP (+HQ)	
SF Altkirch-Franken	Salvan	12e, 171e RIF	—	III+IV/159e RAP	Reserve A
Défense de Belfort	Girol	*[2e [3e, 4e] DBCPyr attached)*	—	V/159e RAP	Reserve B
SF Monbéliard	de Bizemont	2e [3e, 4e] DBCPyr *(attached to Belfort)*	—	VII/159e RAP	Reserve B
67e DI	Boutignon	211e, 214e, 220e RI	52e GRDI	57e RAMD	Reserve B
7e CA	Champon	607e RP	9e GRCA	107e RALA	
27e DI	Doyen	7e RI, 159e RIA, 7e [11e, 15e, 28e] DBCA	20e GRDI	58e RAD, 258e RALD	Active
2e BS	*(Col.)* Peillon	*Horse:* 7e, 9e RSA	—	—	Active
13e DI *(GQG reserve)*	Beaudouin	21e, 60e RI, 8e RTM	17e GRDI	28e RAD, 228e RALD	Active
6e ARMÉE	**Touchon**	406e, 416e, 426e RP, 51e BMM	—	—	
45e CAF	Daille	VII/400e RP	—	II/170e RAP	
SF Jura central	Huet	1re [1er, 2e] DBCPyr, 6e BCPyr *(+ I/406e RP, 4e [23e, 29e] DBIL attached)*	—	II/170e RAP *(elements)*	Reserve A and B
57e DI	Texier	235e, 260e RI, 8e [26e, 66e, 68e] DBCP	62e GRDI	47e RAD, 247e RALD	Reserve B
63e DI	Parvy	238e, 298e, 321e RI	58e GRDI	53e RAMD	Reserve B

3a – French Army Order of Battle, Other Fronts and Colonies, 10 May 1940

Formation	General (or C.O.)	Infantry (or main body)	Recce	Artillery	Mobilisation status, other comments
From the Alps to the Mediterranean		**THÉÂTRE D'OPÉRATIONS DU SUD-EST (TOSE), General Olry**			
ARMÉE DES ALPES	**Olry**	*FT Tanks:* BCTC (Colonial Btn)	—	—	
8e DIC *(GQG reserve)*	Gillier	4e RIC, 25e, 26e RTS	78e GRDI	(8e RACTTT, 208e RALC)*	Formed 30 Apr. 40 (* *goes to 40e DI*)
14e CA	Beynet	614e RP	20e GRCA	114e RALH	
SD Rhône	Michal	230e [179e, 189e BAF, 199e BCHM] DBAF, II/440e RP	—	1re Ble/164e RAP (+ *V/293e RALD attached*)	Reserve
SF Savoie	(Col.) Michet de la Baume	16e [70e, 80e BAF, 6e BM], 30e [71e, 81e, 91e] DBAF I + III/440e RP	—	I/162e RAP, 164e RAP	Active and reserve A
66e DI	Boucher	215e, 251e, 343e RI	53e GRDI	9e RAD, 209e RALD	Reserve B
SF Dauphiné	Cyvoct	75e [82e, 92e, 102e], 157e [72e, 73e, 83e] DBAF IV + V/440e RP (+ *3e [20e, 24e] DBIL attached*)	—	154e, II+III/162e RAP	Active and reserve A
64e DI	de Saint-Vincent	299e RIA, 45e [87e, 93e, 107e], 47e [86e, 91e, 95e] DBCA	55e GRDI	93e RAM, 293e RALD	Reserve B
15e CA	Montagne	615e RP (+ *5e BCPyr, 4e [7e, 8e] DBCPyr att.*)	21e GRCA	113e RALH	
65e DI	de Saint-Julien	203e RIA, 42e [89e, 98e, 100e], 46e [102e, 104e, 105e] DBCA	54e GRDI	96e RAM, 296e RALD	Reserve B
SF Alpes-Maritimes	Magnien	40e [75e, 85e, 95e], 58e [76e, 86e, 96e] DBAF, 61e [74e, 84e, 94e] DBAF, 450e RP (+ *9e, 10e BM att.*)	—	157e, 158e, 167e RAP	Active and reserve A
2e DIC	Maignan	RICM, 4e, 8e RTS	72e GRDI	2e RAC, 202e RALC	Active
SD Nice	Hubert-Brierre	255e RI, IV+V/203e RI	—	XI/363e RAP, XI/54e RA + Naval Arty	Reserve B
CSDCorse	Mollard	363e DBI, 373e DBA	—	92e RAM	Corsican Defences Command (Reserve)
CEFS (Scandinavia)	Audet	13e DBLE, Bde polonaise (*attached to 1re DLCh*)	21e EAM	11e GAAM	Formed 15 Apr. 40 (ex-Gpt A), HQ only in Norway
1re DLCh	Béthouart	ex-BHM : 5e [13e, 53e, 67e], 27e [6e, 12e, 14e] DBCA *H Tanks:* 342e CACC	—	2e GA (10e RACTTT)	Formed 15 Apr. 40, fought in Norway
2e DLCh	(Col.) Durand	2e [9e, 20e, 49e] DBCA, 24e [3e, 19e, 69e] DBCP *FT Tanks:* 343e CACC	—	3e GA (10e RACTTT)	Formed 18 Apr. 40, did not fight in Norway, later transformed into 40e DI (French front)
3e DLI	Duchemin	140e, 141e RIA - *FT Tanks:* 344e CACC	8e GRDI	4e GA (10e RACTTT)	Formed 15 Apr. 40, did not fight in Norway
		THÉÂTRE D'OPÉRATIONS D'AFRIQUE DU NORD (TOAFN), General Noguès			
ALGERIA (19e RM*)	**Goudot**	*Inf.:* 21e BILA - *FT Tks:* 64e BCC - *Cav.:* 5e RCA			**Région militaire* (Military District)
85e DIA*	Wemaere	3e RZ, 11e, 19e RTA	85e GRDI	85e RAA	*Sent to France in late May 40
181e DIA	Despas	29e RZ, 11e, 13e RTS	181e GRDI	GAA 181 (*or 385e*)	
182e DIA	Thomas	1er REI, IV/13e RTS	182e GRDI	GAA 182 (*or 386e*)	
183e DIA	Duclos	23e RZ, CP/1er REI, 15e RTS	183e GRDI	GAA 183 (*or 387e*)	
Front Est-Saharien	Delay ?	11e BILA, V/1er REI + *miscellaneous units*	*Meharists, etc.*	2 Bles (incl. 1 Legion)	Troops along East Saharan border
TUNISIA (CSTT*)	**Blanc**	*Cav.:* 1er REC		*Commandement Supérieur des Troupes de Tunisie* (Tunisia Command)	
83e DIA	Vergèz	344e RI, 3e, 7e RTA	(83e GRDI)	67e RAA	
84e DIA*	Ardant du Picq	4e RZ, 4e, 8e RTT	84e GRDI	62e RAA	*Sent to France in late May 40
88e DIA	Bessière	257e RI, 10e, 18e RTS	88e GRDI	88e RAA, 2e RACTunisie	
Front Sud-Tunisien	Poupinel	*D Tks:* 61e, 65e, 67e BCC - *Cav.:* 3e RCA, 4e BC [4e RCA, 4e RST]		288e RALD	*Sent to France in late May 40
81e DIA	Chevalier	218e RI, 1er, 9e RTA	81e GRDI	65e RAA	
180e DIA	Rochas	22e RZ, 5e, 33e RTA	180e GRDI	380e RAP	Formed late December 39
RF Sud-Tunisien	Berthomé	32e RTT, 35e RTA, 1er, 12e BILA, III/1er REI, 5e RTS	—	388e RAPTunisie	Troops garrisoning the Mareth Line
6e DLC	Clouet des Perruches	*Horse:* 1er, 3e RSA - *Inf.:* 2e RCAP	1er RCA	1er RACTunisie	Formed 1st March 40
MOROCCO	**François**	25e BILA - *Tks:* 62e *(R+FT)*, 66e BCC *(FT)* - *Cav.:* 2e REC, 5e BC [8e RSA, 3e RSM]			
(ex-2e DM)		323e RI, 2e, 4e REI, 3e RTS, BAICM		RACMaroc, 2 Legion Bles	Disbanded as a division (10 Sept 39)
3e DM	Mordacq	21e RZ, 3e REI, 6e RTS	(89e GRDI)	63e RAA	
		THÉÂTRE D'OPÉRATIONS DE MÉDITERRANÉE ORIENTALE (TOMO), General Weygand			
GFML*	Massiet	631e, 632e BPC - *R Tks:* 63e, 68e BCC - *Cav.:* 8e GAM, 3e GE/4e RST		352e RALP	**Groupement des Forces mobiles du Levant*
86e DIA	Cazaban	2e RZ, 2e, 29e RTA	86e GRDI	86e RAA, 286e RALD	Arrived from North Africa, Sept. 39
191e DI	Sarrade	16e RTT, 24e RMIC[1]	191e GRDI	I/41e RAC, III/80e RANA	Regular forces garrisoned in Levant
192e DI	Richard	6e REI, 11e BVE, 17e RTS[1]	192e GRDI	II/41e RAC, I-II/80e RANA	Regular forces garrisoned in Levant
Brigade polonaise	Kopański	2 infantry regiments (*mountain type*)	1 group	1 mountain arty group	Polish troops escaped from Rumania
Troupes spéciales du Levant		*(see details p. 38-39)*			Syrian and Lebanese local forces
		FRENCH COLONIES			
AOF* (French West Africa)		RMIC AOF, 1er, 2e, 7e RTS, BTS N^os 1 to 8		6e RAC	**Afrique-Occidentale Française*
AEF* (French Equatorial Africa)		RTS Tchad, BTS AEF, BTS Oubangui		*Mountain sections*	**Afrique-Equatoriale Française*
MADAGASCAR		1er, 2e RMM, BTM		GAAC Diego-Suarez, GAAC Emyrne	
INDOCHINA	Div. du Tonkin	9e RIC, 19e RMIC, 5e REI, 1er, 3e, 4e RTT	DMT/DML*	4e RAC	**Dét. motorisé du Tonkin/DM Légion*
	Brigade d'Annam-Laos	10e RIC, 16e RMIC, BTMSA	DMA*		**Détachement motorisé d'Annam*
	Div. de Cochinchine-Cambodge	11e RIC, RTA, RTAbis - Cambodia: RTC	DMC*	5e RAC	**Détachement motorisé de Cochinchine*

1. Plus 10e DBMA IV/6e, IV/7e RTA, V/1er RTM. This demi-brigade was first allocated to 192e DI, then to 191e DI in June 40, when a newly-created 12e RTT reached the Levant to reinforce 192e DI.

The peacetime army also included a number of chasseur battalions: 11 battalions of *chasseurs à pied*, and 12 of Alpine troops (*chasseurs alpins*). Chasseur battalions normally served in chasseur demi-brigades of three battalions each. Four battalions (the 4e, 5e, 16e and 17e) were converted into motor battalions (*bataillons portés*) to form the infantry component of the armoured divisions.

On mobilisation, the line infantry was strengthened by the creation

4 – Newly created formations, 15 May-10 June 1940

Formation	General (or C.O.)	Infantry (or main body)	Recce	Artillery	Date of creation and comments
10e ARMÉE	**Altmayer**	435e RP, 486e RPC - *Cav. Tks:* 7e RC	—	—	31 May, ex-'Gpt Altmayer' along River Somme
25e CA	Audet	625e RP	—	125e RALA	1st June, incluoing 85e DIA + 241e DLI
2e GC	Buisson	*R Tks:* 3e BCC, GBC 508 [10e BCC]	—	—	3 June, including 3e DCR, 7e DLM + Maczek's Bde
Gpt Duffour	Duffour	IV/239e RI (+ misc. elts) - *FT Tks:* 109e BCC	126e GRDI	GA/11e RA,	19 May, to guard lower River Seine; then, from
		Mech. Cav.: 1er, 2e, 4e, 5e groupes francs de cav.	—	190e, 196e RALT	10 June, it included 17e + 236e DLI
Gpt Dubuisson	Dubuisson	444e RP, 482e RPC *(elts),* 1re [15e, 16e, 18e, 19e] DBIL	—	—	13 June, to defend Verdun (including 3e DIC + SF Montmédy)
2e DCR	(Col.) Perré	*B Tks:* 8/15, 347e, 348e 349e - *H:* 14/27, 35re - *R:* 40e, 43e BCC - *Inf.:* 17e BCP	—	309e RATTT	20-27 May, reconstructed with new tank units
4e DCR	(Col.) de Gaulle	*B Tks:* 46e, 47e - *R Tks:* 2e, 24e, 44e BCC - *Inf.:* 4e BCP, 22e RIC	10e RC	322e RATTT	15 May, mixture of two proposed armoured
		D Tks: 19e, 345e, 346e, 350e - *Cav Tks:* 3e RC ; 7e RDP			div. including a '4e DLM' (standard type)
40e DI	Durand	2e [9e, 20e, 49e, 5e [13e, 53e, 67e] DBCA, 24e [3e,19e,69e] DBCP	—	8e RACTTT, 208e RALC	30 May, chasseurs from 1re + 2e DLCh
1re DLI	de Camas	43e, 110e RI	—	327e RAD tracté	10 June, from remnants of 1re DIM
17e DLI	Darde	90e, 114e RI	121e GRDI	97e RAD	31 May, mainly from remnants of 18e DI
53e DLI	Etcheberrigaray	208e, 329e RI	66e GRDI	22e RAD	31 May, ex-53e DI reorganised
(17e DI) 59e DLI	Lascroux	83e, 135e RI	47e GRDI	84e RAD	18 May/1 June, from remnants of 55e + 71e DI
235e DLI	Trolley de Prévaux	9e, 108e RI	—	323e RAD tracté	1 June, from miscellaneous elements
236e DLI	Deligne	64e, 118e RI	123e GRDI	90e RAD (+III/196e)	8 June, from remnants of 102e DIF, 22e DI + 9e DIM
237e DLI	François	236e, 274e RI *(+ 55e BMIC att.)*	124e *(later 80e +127e)* GRDI	95e RAD (+VII/306e)	27 May, mainly from remnants of 5e DIM + 55e DI
238e DLI	Debeney	25e, 144e RI	—	324e RAD tracté *(+192e)*	1 June, from miscellaneous elements
239e DLI	Dunoyer	59e, 138e RI *(+ 2nd Czech IR, attached)*	129e GRDI	325e RAD tracté *(+316e)*	1 June, from miscellaneous elements
240e DLI	(Boucher) Buisson	40e DBNA, 42e RIC *(+ 10th Polish Armoured Brigade)*	—	(326e RAD tracté)	5 June, from miscellaneous elements
241e DLI	Lhéritier	219e, 264e RI *(+ 404e, 441e RP att.)*	122e *(+125e later)* GRDI	98e RAD tracté	27 May, from remnants of 61e DI and depots
1re DLINA	Tarrit	27e RTA, 1er RTM	95e GRDI	54e RANA	9 June, from remnants of 1re DIM, 1re, 2e, 4e 5e DINA
2e DLIC	Maignan	4e [5e, 7e, 8e] DBCPyr, 8e RTS	72e GRDI	2e RMAC	8 June, from 2e DIC + other elements
5e DLIC	Gillier	RICM, 26e RTS	78e GRDI	9e RAD, VI/296e RALD	6 June, from 8e DIC + elts of 2e DIC, 55e + 66e DI
4e DLM	(Col.) Leyer	*Cav. Tks:* GE La Roche - *Inf.:* 1er RCh, 5e RDP	1er RAM	75e RATTT	10 June (reduced type), ex-1re DLC + other elts
7e DLM	Marteau	*Cav. Tks:* 8e RD - *Inf.:* 14e, 31e RDP	4e RAM	77e RATTT	5 June (reduced type), ex-4e DLC
Late additions to various formations:		*Inf.:* 232e RI (Loire), 23e RMVE (8e DI), 54e RIC (Coastal def.), 1st Czech IR (23e DI) - *B Tks:* 352e CACC (CC) *Rifles:* 12e RDP (1re DLM), 17e RDP (3e DLM)	128e GRDI (3e DLC) 8e GRDI (3e DLI)	— [1]	

1. Only main Infantry, Tank and Cavalry units. Artillery flgts not quoted here (allocated to General Reserve) are listed on Table 7, p. 16.

of a further 85 regiments and demi-brigades as Type A reserves, which took up vacant numbers between 1 and 174. These regiments were composed largely of reservists around a regular cadre. However, since the period of conscription had been raised from one to two years only in 1935, most of the reservists recalled to the colours in 1939 had received no more than a barely adequate year's training. A further 61 Type B reserve regiments and demi-brigades were then created from the Type A regiments, numbered by adding 200 to the number of the parent regiment, and composed entirely of reservists in their thirties and forties. Despite their age, these men were not necessarily the least effective: the Dunkirk perimeter was held by Type B regiments who performed much better than some of their younger comrades in arms. In Spring 1940, another 18 regiments (including 13 of the 1-174 series) were formed from battalions separated from their regiment, or from training centres.

The chasseurs were similarly reinforced on mobilisation, the chasseurs à pied raising 18 Type A and B Reserve battalions, and the chasseurs alpins 23. From September 1939, the chasseurs also included ten battalions of Pyrenean troops (*chasseurs pyrénéens*), and the specialist ski troops of the 199e *Bataillon de chasseurs de haute montagne*, who were officially included in the Alpine Fortress battalions.

The metropolitan infantry mobilised in 1939-40 also contained 11 machine gun battalions, numbered from 1 to 11, eight motorised machine gun battalions, numbered from 51 to 58, and 67 pioneer regiments. The pioneer regiments, numbered between 400 and 460 and between 600 and 625 (not all the numbers were used), were raised from older men, and were not equipped with the full range of heavy weapons allotted to infantry regiments.

Each line infantry battalion of 20 officers and 850 men comprised three rifle companies of four officers and 190 men (each divided into an HQ, with a 60mm mortar, and four platoons, each containing three sections); and a heavy weapons company of four officers and 190 men

The colour party of 172e Régiment d'Infanterie de Forteresse, Strasbourg 1939. Unlike line RIs, RIFs included two or three machine gun battalions (four in the 155e) as well as *compagnies d'équipages et d'ouvrages*, who manned the posts of the Maginot Line. Battalions comprised three machine gun companies (although only two in some RIFs) and a mixed infantry/heavy weapons company. (Coll. P. Brétégnier)

(divided into four machine gun platoons with four machine guns each, and a platoon manning two 25mm anti-tank guns and two 81mm mortars). The regiment also included an HQ company, a services company (transport, medical, etc.) and an additional heavy weapons company (three officers and 100 men, with a further six 25 mm anti-tank guns, two 81mm mortars and three Renault UE tracked carriers).

The colonial empire provided a powerful addition to the infantry. In service on 10 May 1940 on all fronts, were no less than 14 regiments of zouaves (recruited solely from Frenchmen in North Africa or metropolitan France), 42 regiments of Algerian, Tunisian and Moroccan tirailleurs (raised from locals), 13 battalions of Light Infantry (recruited from petty criminals) and 59 Colonial regiments (about a third of which were recruited from Frenchmen, the others from Senegalese, Malagasies and Indochinese). Most of these regiments were organised in exactly the same way as the metropolitan troops. Together with the Legion and other foreign volunteers (12 regiments and demi-brigades in the Foreign Legion), the French infantry order of battle at the start of May 1940 reached a total of 1,130 battalions (not including the pioneers).

A number of *régiments régionaux de protection* and *régiments régionaux de travailleurs* were also formed on the outbreak of war. Both were composed of men who no longer had any reserve commitment, but who were still of military age. The first were assigned the role, in conjunction with the *gendarmerie*, of guarding lines of communication in the rear areas; the latter were employed on pioneer duties. All were given a number composed of that of the Military Region plus an extra figure in sequence; the 143e Régiment Régional, for example, was thus the Third Regiment of the Fourteenth Region.

Infantry Tank Force

French tank units were drawn from two different arms-of-service: the *Chars de Combat*, the Army's original tank force equipped with infantry tanks, and regiments of former horsed cavalry.

Created as part of the artillery in 1916, the Chars de Combat was intended by its creator, General Estienne, to form a wholly independent arm. He had envisaged a mobile armoured corps of 100,000 men driving into the heart of the enemy position to devastating effect, crushing everything in its path. But this idea did not prevail; in 1920, tanks were attached to the infantry, and consequently made subordinate to its slow methodical tactics. The idea of forming true 'mobile divisions', relying on tanks, motorised infantry and artillery en masse, was first explored in France by General Doumenc in 1929. Then, in 1934, Lieutenant-Colonel

de Gaulle promoted the idea of an 'élite army', a truly mobile armoured force, of six 'line divisions' and one 'light division' (like that recently created within the cavalry), and employing only career, not conscript, soldiers. But a prophet is without honour in his own country. The French government did not want an armoured corps, since it contradicted its essentially defensive policy. Nor, for political reasons, did it wish to see an army of professional soldiers. Further, when in 1936 it was decided in principle to create two armoured divisions as a counterattack and breakthrough force only, their formation was postponed due to a lack of equipment (notably of the Char B). Not only in January 1940 were the 1re and 2e DCR finally assembled, and then only at half the theoretical strength. The 3e was formed in March and the 4e – under de Gaulle's command – in the middle of the May 1940 battle.

In some ways, the French tanks were better than the Panzers Mark I and II which equipped the majority of the German armoured forces: the Type B1bis and the Somua were both more heavily armoured and carried better armament. However, the French tanks, especially the infantry tanks, were also slow; the lighter ones were not equipped with radios; the main gun was operated by the tank commander in a one-man turret; and their small petrol tank gave them only a limited range. Further, except for the Armoured Divisions equipped with the powerful Char B (two battalions in each DCR, i.e. 68 tanks), and the fast Hotchkiss H39 light tank (two battalions per DCR, i.e. 90 tanks), the bulk of the chars de combat battalions were spread throughout the armies for infantry support duties.

OPPOSITE **Weighing 30 tonnes, with 60mm armour and two guns (75mm in the hull, 47mm anti-tank gun in the turret), the B1bis was the most powerful tank in Western Europe in 1939-40. Exactly 403 examples (B1 and B1bis) had been built by mid-June 1940.**

5 – Infantry Tank units, 1939-1940

Abbreviation/French full designation	*Translation/Observations*
RCC *(régiment de chars de combat)**	Tank Regiment*
GBC *(groupe de bataillons de chars)**	Group of Tank Battalions*
BCC *(bataillon de chars de combat)*	Tank Battalion
BCTC *(btn de chars des troupes coloniales)*	Colonial Tank Btn *(not numbered)*
CACC *(compagnie autonome de ch. de c.)*	Independent Tank Company

Note
*Tank regiments (RCC) were only peacetime formations, each containing two battalions, which would become independent BCCs at mobilisation. For administrative purposes only, GBCs succeeded RCCs in September 1939. Except within DCRs, BCCs were always employed singly, at best at battalion strength. Frequently, they were sent to their destruction company by company (13 tanks), or by platoons of three, or even tank by tank, defending a bridge or crossroads!

NCOs and chasseurs of the 48e Bataillon de Chars de Combat, which was equipped with Renault R35s and the new R40s (with AMX tracks), at the end of June 1940. A wide range of uniforms is on view here, including a mechanic's overall suit on the left, and, in the centre, a sergent-chef wearing the 1935-pattern leather jacket, complete with collar patches (which was unusual) and the badge of the 2e DCR (which was even more unusual!). The braid on the tank force small dark blue beret was a popular, if non-regulation, addition.
(Coll. Henri Gallot)

The fast, heavily armoured 20 tonne Somua S35, was the backbone of the French cavalry mechanised divisions. 430 Somua had been built up to June 1940. This one, destroyed in Northern France, belonged to 18e Dragoons (1re DLM) (Coll. P. Bouchery)

At the request of the High Command, French industry continued to concentrate on producing tanks for this role, manufacturing 1,650 Renault R35/40s to replace the ageing FT model.

Cavalry

Like its contemporaries in other armies, the French cavalry of 1939-40 was a combination of the traditional and modern, some with wholly mechanised formations, while others remained horsed.

During the 1920s there were five cavalry divisions, composed of three brigades (six regiments) and a regiment of horse artillery. Two or three squadrons of White armoured cars, dating from 1918, formed the only mechanised element; as an infantry component, the division included a group of chasseur cyclists. From 1929, the artillery was motorised, the cyclists were transformed into a motorised battalion of dragoons (BDP) with motorcycle/side-car combinations and Citroën-Kégresse half-tracks, whilst the armoured cars were formed into a Group (GAM), which, in 1939, was enlarged to a regiment (RAM) of six squadrons. These new cavalry divisions (DC type 1932) now contained only two horsed brigades (four regiments) and a light mechanised brigade (BLM) grouping together the motorised dragoons and the GAM/RAM. The engineers and other services were motorised at the same time.

From 1933, the 4e DC underwent a more radical transformation, becoming entirely motorised and armoured, and changing its name in 1935 to become the 1re *Division Légère Mécanique* (DLM). The 5e DC underwent the same process in 1936, becoming the 2e DLM. The two new divisions were gradually equipped with the new Somua S35 – a fast, well armed and heavily armoured tank – as they rolled off the production line. Although 'light' in name, the DLMs were the equivalent of a German Panzer division, containing more than 300 armoured vehicles: 190 tanks (one half S35s and the other Hotchkiss H35s in the two 'combat regiments'), 69 Renault AMR35s (equipping the motorised dragoons) and 48 wheeled Panhard AMDs (which equipped two squadrons of the reconnaissance regiment, while its remaining

two squadrons used motorcycle combinations). The dragoon motor regiment of these divisions was a powerful unit of three battalions (each comprising one squadron of AMR35s, one with motorcycle combinations, and three on six-wheel Laffly S20TL or Lorraine L28 carriers). The artillery regiment, equipped with tractors, was three groups strong (armed with 24x75mm, and 12x105C35).

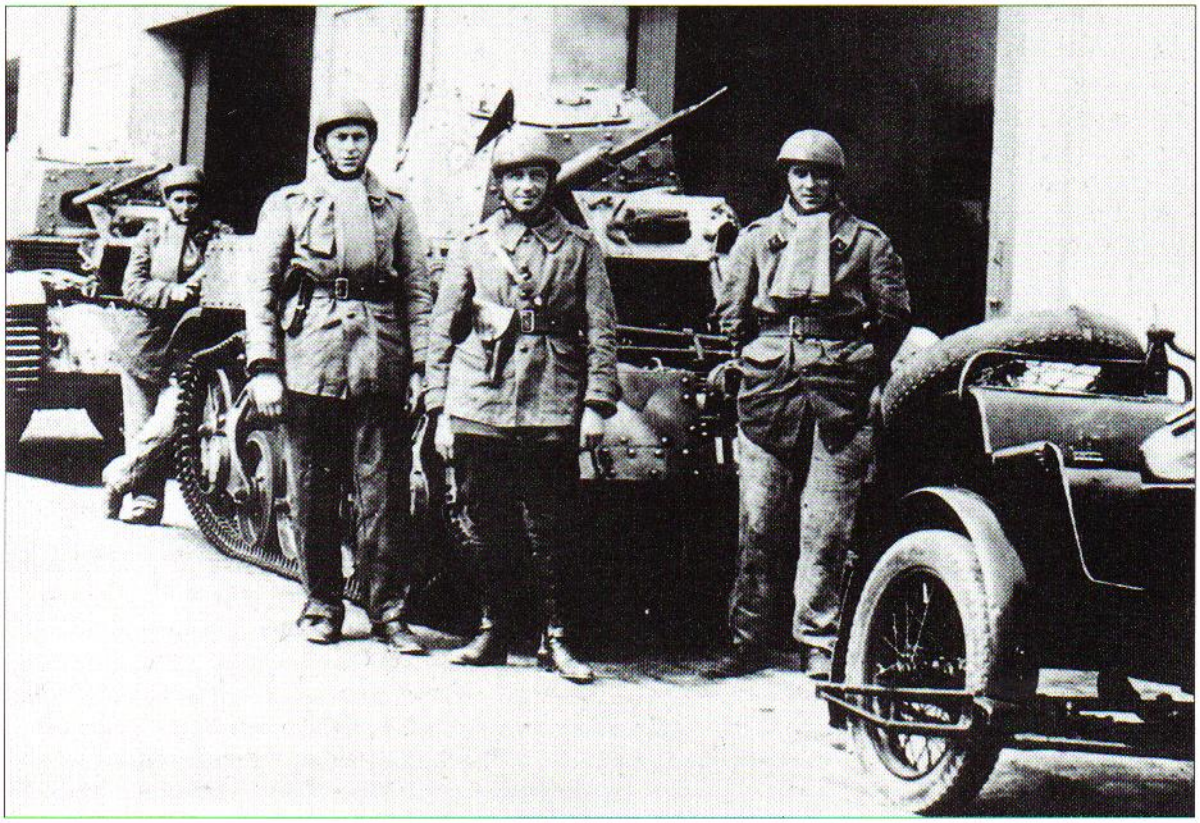
In September 1939, there were thus five cavalry divisions in the field (1re, 2e and 3e DC plus the 1re and 2e DLM). In February 1940, however, the three DCs were transformed into five light divisions (DL), which only one month later, on 5 March 1940, were renamed light cavalry divisions (DLC). Each of these included just one horsed brigade and a weaker dragoon motor regiment of only two battalions, and two, instead of three, groups per artillery regiment. The horsed regiments were unchanged in their organisation, comprising four sabre squadrons (with five officers and 172 men each, in four troops) plus a heavy weapons squadron (with six officers and 208 men, equipped with 12 machine guns, four 60mm mortars and four 25mm anti-tank guns) – 1,100 men in all. Each DLM and DLC also included a divisional anti-tank squadron (12x25mm weapons) manned by the cavalry, and a divisional anti-tank battery (with eight 47mm) manned by the artillery.

A 3e DLM was created in February 1940, and a fourth should have followed on 1 July, but its regiments ready in May were included instead in the 'de Gaulle Force' (*groupement de Gaulle*), the original name of the 4e DCR. At the start of June, the 1re and 4e DLCs were transformed into 'reduced DLMs', and numbered by adding three to their original number, thus becoming the 4e and 7e DLM respectively. At the same time, the three original DLMs, having lost all their equipment in the fighting in the north, were re-formed with the bare minimum of men and new equipment.

Besides these divisions, the cavalry formed four independent mounted brigades (three were formed from North African spahis; the fourth was the brigade left over from the creation of the DLCs). The other cavalry component consisted of the numerous reconnaissance groups attached to infantry divisions (GRDIs) and army corps (GRCAs). These units, which had the firepower of a small battalion, were generally

A trooper of the 6e Dragons (3e DLC), spring 1940, but wearing, as was often seen at this time, the peacetime piped jacket with tin buttons. The saddlery and harness is complete with 1925-pattern saddle-bags and a modified 1916-pattern bandolier. The sabre is carried vertically on the right side in traditional fashion, although, according to the February 1938 regulations, it should have been carried diagonally on the left side, as in the African cavalry regiments. (Coll. Paul Ringenbach)

ABOVE OPPOSITE **These Renault AMR35s crewmen belong to the 1er RDP (*dragons portés*), from Pontoise. Their red-brown uniform (see Plate E1) includes the light khaki *chèche*, the grenade helmet badge and the patches of motorised dragoons, with its third, violet, soutache. In the centre is an adjudant or adjudant-chef wearing khaki breeches and leggings. He is wearing an officers' belt and a holster of the simplified 1915 pattern.**



mixed horse/motor, containing one horsed squadron (two in the case of GRCAs), one motorcycle squadron and one lorried heavy weapons squadron. Those attached to motorised formations, however, had no horsed element, but included instead, in the GRDIm, two armoured car squadrons (with 16 AMDs and 16 AMRs).

Outside France, the regiments of *chasseurs d'Afrique*, composed of French personnel, were right in the middle of their mechanisation programme when war broke out, with the result that some regiments were entirely armoured, whilst others remained mixed. A 6e DLC, intended for the Middle East under General Weygand, was formed in North Africa at the beginning of 1940.

6 – Cavalry units, 1939-1940

Preliminary note: all branches-of-services were numbered in a separate series from 1, except the pairs denoted with a vertical line, which were numbered in the same series.

Abbreviation/French full designation	*Translation (and types of unit)*
Metropolitan Cavalry	
RC (*régiment de cuirassiers*)	Cuirassier Rgt (*horse, mechanised recce or cavalry tanks*)*
RD (*régiment de dragons*)	Dragoon Rgt (*horsed or cav. tanks*)*
RDP (*régiment de dragons portés*)	Motor Dragoon Rgt (*motorised rifles*)
RCh (*régiment de chasseurs*)	Chasseur Regiment (*horsed*)**
RH (*régiment de hussards*)	Hussar Regiment (*horsed*)
RAM (*régiment d'automitrailleuses*)	Armoured Car Rgt (*mech. recce*)
GRCA (*groupe de reconnaissance de CA*)	Army Corps Recce Group
GRDI (*groupe de reconnaissance de DI*)	Infantry Division Recce Group
GRRF (*groupe de reconnaissance de RF*)	Fortified Region Recce Group
GFC (*groupe franc de cavalerie*)	Cavalry Groupe Franc (June 1940)
(North) Africa Cavalry	
RCA (*régiment de chasseurs d'Afrique*)	Chasseur d'Afrique Rgt (*all types existed in 1939-40, see text*)
RSA (*régiment de spahis algériens*)	Algerian Spahi Regiment (*horsed*)
RST (*régiment de spahis tunisiens*)	Tunisian Spahi Regiment (*horsed*)
RSM (*régiment de spahis marocains*)	Moroccan Spahi Regiment (*horsed*)
REC (*régiment étranger de cavalerie*)	Foreign Legion Cav. Rgt (*mixed*)

Notes

*Completely different organisation and equipment, depending on their role within their respective division. Except for the number, there was no change in the regimental name.
**The 1er RCh became a motor regiment in June 1940 (see OB p. 10, 4e DLM).

Artillery

'I hate the French artillery', said Marshal Ludendorff in 1918. This enormous force of more than 10,500 tubes of all calibres (not including anti-aircraft and fortress weapons) was still available in 1939-40. Following reforms in 1923, all regiments were numbered in one sequence from 1 to 409, their role being indicated by their place in the sequence (see Table 7). Only colonial artillery was numbered separately. All the artillery

7 – Artillery Regiments, May-June 1940

Abbreviation and Category	*Regimental number*
Divisional and Fortress Light Field Artillery	**1 to 99** *(79, 83 vacant)*
RAD *(-divisionnaire*: divisional Arty Rgt)	1-99 *except below:*
RAD *motorisé* (motorised div. Arty Rgt)	1, 11, 15, 16, 25, 30, 42, 98
RAMD *(-mixte*: mixed 75mm +155C Arty Rgt)	38, 44, 45, 50-53, 57
RATTT *(-tracté tout terrain*: all-terrain Arty Rgt)	71-78
RARF *(-de région fortifiée*: Fortress Arty Rgt)	23, 39, 46, 49, 59, 60, 69
RAMF *(-mobile de forteresse*: mobile Fortress Arty Rgt)	70, 99
RAM *(-de montagne*: Mountain Arty Rgt)	2, 92, 93, 94, 96
RANA *(-nord-africain*: North African Arty Rgt)	6, 20, 33, 40, 54, 80, 81, 82
RAA *(-d'Afrique*: African Arty Rgt)	62-67, 85-88
Army Corps Heavy Field Artillery	**101 to 125** *(119, 122 vacant)*
RALA *(-lourde automobile*: heavy motor Arty Rgt)	101-104, 107, 108, 120, 123-125
RALH *(-lourde hippomobile*: heavy horse Arty Rgt)	105, 106, 109, 112-118, 121
RALHC *(-lourde hippo. coloniale*: heavy horse Col.)	110, 111
General Reserve Heavy Horse Artillery	**141 to 149**
RALH *(-lourde hippomobile*: heavy horse Arty Rgt)	141-149 *(148 disbanded Jan. 40)*
(Fixed) Fortress Artillery	**150 to 170**
RAP *(-de position*: position Arty Rgt)	150-170
General Reserve Super Heavy Artillery	**171 to 174**
RALGP *(-lourde à grande puissance)*	171-174
General Reserve Heavy Towed Artillery	**180 to 197**
RALT *(-lourde à tracteurs*: with prime movers)	180-189 *(long heavy guns)*
RALT *(-lourde à tracteurs*: with prime movers)	190-197 *(short heavy guns)*
Divisional Heavy Field Artillery	**201 to 296** *(many vacant)*
RALD *(-lourde divisionnaire*: div. heavy Arty)	201-296 *(many vacant)*
Lorry-borne (or Towed) Light Field Artillery	**301 to 329** *(328 vacant)*
RAP *(-portée)*, general reserve	301-321 *except below:*
RACP *(-coloniale portée)*, general reserve	310, 320
RATTT *(-tracté tout terrain*: all-terrain Arty Rgt)	305, 309, 319, 322
RAD *tracté* (towed with prime movers or trucks)	323-327, 329
Lorry-borne Heavy Field Artillery	**6 regiments**
RALP *(-lourde portée)*, general reserve	351, 352, 355, 361, 363, 364
Super Heavy Railway Arty, General Reserve	**6 regiments**
RALVF *(-lourde sur voie ferrée)*	370-375 *(370 = service Rgt)*
Miscellaneous Artillery Rgts and Groups	
Additional North African Arty regiments	380, 385, 386, 387, 388
RAT *(-de tranchée*: trench Arty Rgt)	391
(other Artillery regiments, especially Colonial and those raised in the Levant, were not known by a number but by their location; see OBs pp 7-10)	
Anti-Aircraft Artillery	—[2]
RADCA *(-de défense contre aéronefs)*	401 to 409
Colonial Artillery with separate serial numbers[3]	**32 regiments**
RAC *(-coloniale*: divisional light field Arty Rgt)	1-3, 8-10, 12, 22, 41, 42
RACMM (same but *'mixte Malgache'*)	21, 23, 32
RALC *(-lourde coloniale*: heavy field Arty Rgt)	11, 201-203, 208, 212, 222, 242
RALCMM (same but *'mixte Malgache'*)	221, 223, 232
RAC in Colonies, or with geographical name	4-6 [+ 5 other rgts, see OB p.9]

Notes

1. 223, 238, 239, 244-246, 249, 250-252, 253, 257, 259, 260, 263, 269-280, 283, 284, 290, 292 and 295 RALDs were not formed; 285 became 281; 265 became 206, 297 became 90 RAD, and 267 was disbanded in Nov. 39.
2. AA Artillery fought in countless independent groups and batteries scattered throughout all the Armies and everywhere in the country. However, all AA personnel wore their regiment's number on their collar patches.
3. Four Colonial Rgts were numbered in the Metropolitan series: 110, 111, 310, 320.

ABOVE, RIGHT **In every infantry division, except the seven motorised ones, the artillery was horse-drawn, with the 1897-pattern Puteaux 75mm guns being drawn by a four-horse limber. As can be seen here, three gunners, armed with the 1892 M16 carbine and dressed as non-mounted troops (with an infantry pattern *capote*) sat on the limber. (Coll. Alain Guilloux)**

was drawn either by horses or by heavy tractors, with all that implies in terms of mobility and vulnerability to air attack – there were only a few, improvised, self-propelled weapons.

An infantry division normally comprised one regiment of field artillery (three groups of 36 1897-pattern 75mm guns) and one heavy regiment (two groups of 24 155CS, or sometimes 12 105C and 12 155CS); several B Reserve divisions, however, included only a single mixed regiment (four groups of 36 75mm and 12 155CS). In addition to the divisional artillery, and the corps artillery mentioned above, many regiments belonged to the General Artillery Reserve (RGA), at the C-in-C's disposal. More than 300 regiments were mobilised in 1939-40, but, if the numbers involved were formidable, most of the equipment had changed little since 1918. Innovations in the sphere of artillery consisted almost solely of the addition of tyres to hundreds of existing pieces: the 75, 105L, 155CS and 155GPFT. Some entirely new equipment was produced (300 x 105C34S and 35B light howitzers, 150 x 105L36S medium pieces); but the main effort of artillery rearmament went into anti-tank guns (1,100 x 47mm AT37) and into anti-aircraft weapons (1,500 x 25mm AA38/39/40 and 350 x 75mm AA32).

Engineers, Transport, Services

(NB: Personnel of the supporting services continued to wear on their collars the number of the peacetime formation responsible for their mobilisation. It bore no resemblance to the number of the company, group or detachment in which they served.)

The engineers were formed into companies (two per army corps and infantry division, one per DLC and DCR, and three per DLM), which

performed the usual tasks of construction and demolition. Army Corps and DLMs also included a bridging train of one company; the Army Corps also had a park squadron.

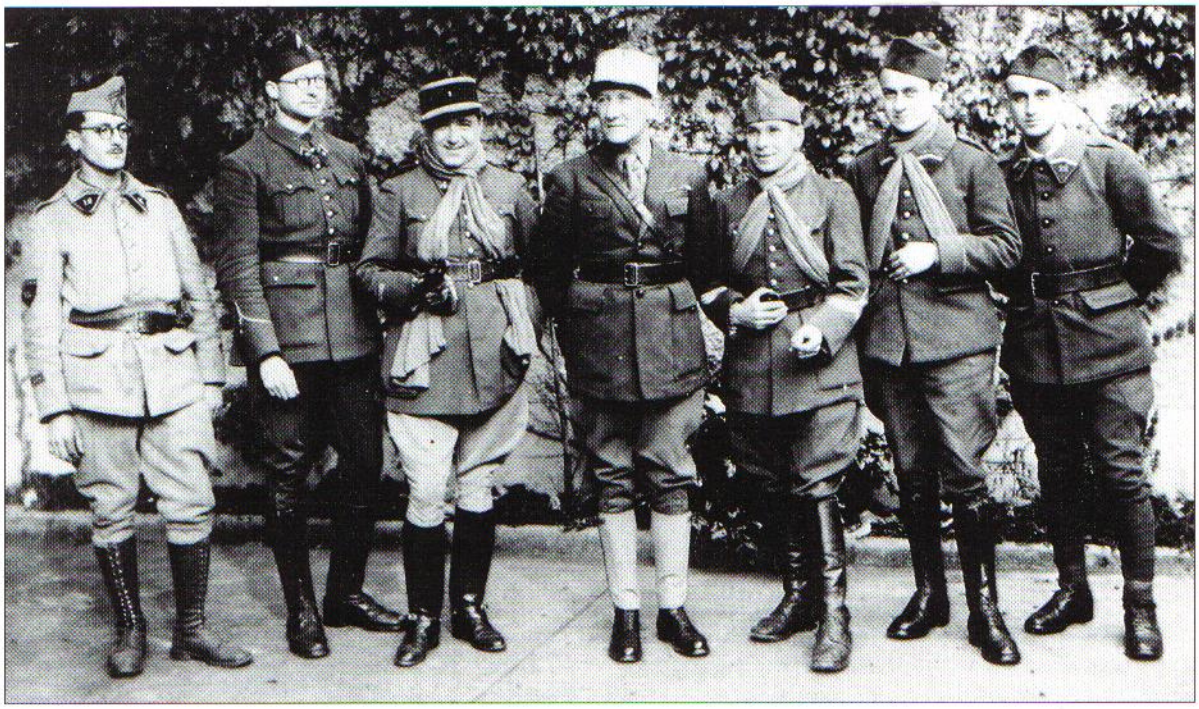
Until 1942, signals were still the responsibility of the engineers. Each DI, DLM and Corps included one telegraph and one radio company; DLCs and DCRs had only one mixed telegraph/radio company.

There were few transport units at the divisional or corps level (one horsed company and one motorised company per division or corps, two motorised companies for mechanised formations), but there were a large number of motorised units available for deployment on strategic routes. These units were divided into GTPs (personnel transport) and GTMs (matériel transport), each comprising three or four companies equipped with coaches, trucks and vans, plus a section of staff cars and one for traffic control. In total, each GT was equipped with 300 to 500 vehicles according to type; for example, the vehicles of three GTPs were required to move an infantry division. Even though production of military trucks and vans reached 40,000 between September 1939 and June 1940, the GTs, like many other units, continued to rely on requisitioned vehicles for the greater part of their equipment. The Transport Service (Train) also provided drivers for ambulances (one section per division) and for fresh meat transportation sections.

One medical group was attached to each division, as well as to each corps (a field hospital) and to armies (an evacuation hospital). To these could be added ordinary hospital resources throughout France (themselves considerably reinforced after the bloody experience of the First World War).

Reservists of the 8e and 38e Génie with their commandeered Renault van, 1939-40. All are wearing the seven-button 1920 *vareuse*, with the collar unhooked, as was the fashion during the 'Phoney War'. The man standing in the foreground, undoubtedly the driver, has been issued a pair of 1935-pattern *salopettes* in red-brown or khaki canvas. Engineer units whose number ended in an eight were always signals units, hence the T (for *transmissions*) on the mudguard.

There was no women's section in the French Army of 1939-40. However, several hundred women served as civilian volunteers in auxiliary ambulance sections, attached to the Army in the field. These elegant volunteers of the SSAF-SSBM (the future French Red Cross) are wearing a uniform in RAF blue superfine cloth.



Officers and cavalry troopers, belonging largely to the 18e Dragons Motorisés. Taken after mobilisation in 1939, this photo shows an interesting variety of uniforms among the officers and, particularly, among the men: on the left, a corporal in horizon blue, wearing a 1920-pattern *vareuse* with, on its sleeve, a patch commemorating a disbanded regiment. On the right, one trooper wears a khaki 1920/35 *vareuse* with sky blue piping and tin buttons, while the other wears a *vareuse* with khaki buttons taken from reserve stocks.

UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT 1939-40

The major simplifications in uniform brought about by the First World War (see MAA 286) eliminated virtually all the old distinctions characteristic of the different branches of the French Army. With the exception of African and Colonial troops, all Army personnel received clothing that belonged to one of just two basic categories. Non-mounted troops (whether on foot or carried in vehicles) received a greatcoat (*capote*), trousers (*pantalon-culotte*) and puttees; troops mounted on horseback, got another type of greatcoat (*manteau*), breeches (*culotte*) and leggings. The tunic (*vareuse*), identical for all branches, was altered in 1919, with a stand-and-fall collar replacing the upright collar. All items of clothing were slightly modified and redesigned from 1920 onwards: notably, the *vareuse* now had seven buttons down the front instead of five, and the *capote* lost the buttons on the pocket flaps.

Every soldier in the Army received clothing for three different orders of dress during his time with the colours. One, either brand new or well maintained in a smart condition, was reserved for walking-out on Sundays, inspections, parades, and for the formal departure to the front. The other two orders of dress were barracks dress and training order, neither of which were carried on campaign. Reservists called up at mobilisation – who formed most of the Army – were to be provided with new clothing from reserve magazines: in 1939, their uniform was khaki serge with half-ball buttons painted in matt dark khaki.

Other Ranks' Uniforms

During the 1920s, only African and Colonial troops wore khaki. The decision to standardise Army uniforms on this colour, in a shade known

as 'American khaki', was actually made in the autumn of 1921, but, because of the huge stock of horizon blue uniforms, it was another 15 years before khaki items were widely distributed to metropolitan troops. In the crucial year of 1935 the international situation finally forced changes when, scared of Germany's further intentions after its re-occupation of the demilitarised Saarland, France reintroduced a conscription period of two years. A walking-out dress in khaki was introduced on 31 August for the newly raised fortress troops (see Plate A2) and, only three weeks later, for all metropolitan troops. Khaki garments were readily available, having been manufactured and placed in storage since the late 1920s, and by the end of the year the measure had taken full effect. But, to make the new uniform a proper walking-out dress, it was decorated with polished buttons and new branch distinctions (see Table I): thin lines of piping in the arm-of-service colour were added to the cuffs and to the edges of the shoulder straps (this also applied to the *capote* and *manteau*, which were given shoulder straps for the first time). The new uniform was worn with the *képi*, which was reintroduced in 1930 in horizon blue or khaki, but now worn in its distinctive pre-1914 colours. Badges of rank retained their 1931 form – an elongated chevron – but were now in the arm-of-service colour. Another important new feature was a khaki shirt with chest pockets, worn with a tie in a dark khaki colour. The shirt and tie were intended to be visible at the collar, an effect which was achieved by removing the top-most button of the *vareuse* and of the *manteau*, and slightly lowering the opening of the collar (although this was not necessary with the *capote*). From then on, the *manteau* was left with five buttons down the front, and the *vareuse* with six.

In 1936 the *jersey*, a light pullover in khaki wool with a stand-and-fall-collar, was introduced. This was issued to all non-mounted troops to replace the *vareuse*, and so lighten the individual's burden.

A new working dress in khaki canvas, the *veste-bourgeron* and *salopette*, was adopted in 1938 (see Plate B2). At the same time, a complete new uniform was introduced: the new items included ample 'golf' trousers, typical of the fashions of the time, a *vareuse* with a five-button front, a single-breasted *capote* and a *manteau* with shoulder tabs. Tunic, *capote* and *manteau* were all given a better fit around the chest. None of the 1938-pattern items had been distributed by the outbreak of war, although the new trousers were widely issued from the beginning of 1940 (even to mounted troops), since those of the old pattern quickly wore out. The trousers apart, these new patterns did little to affect the silhouette of the French soldier, who in May

I – Khaki ORs walking-out dress 1935-39

Arm-of-service	*Piping*	*Braid*	*Button*[1]
Infantry/Zouaves	garance	garance	tombac
Alg./Tun. tirailleurs	yellow	yellow	tombac
Moroccan tirailleurs	light green	light green	tombac
African light infantry	violet	garance	tin
Foreign Legion inf.	green	green	tombac, *Légion Etrangère*
Tanks	green	green	tin
Cavalry (except spahis)	sky blue	dark blue	tin
Spahis	yellow	yellow	tombac
Foreign Legion cav.	light green	green	tin, *Légion Etrangère*
Artillery/Engineers	scarlet	scarlet	tombac
Train/Administration	garance	garance	tin
Medical Orderlies	garance	garance	tombac

Note
1. Of the plain half-ball shape, except Foreign Legion (domed with motto).
All Colonial troops had the domed tombac type with anchor and fleuron.

These three friends from the 14e Section d'Infirmiers Militaires (note horizon blue numbers on garance collar patches without soutaches, and an infantry *képi*) from Lyon wear the 1920/35 walking-out dress, with its distinctive piping. Two wear the 1935-pattern shirt and tie, clearly visible here, thanks to the removal of the top button and the consequent lowering of the collar opening. (Coll. Eric Miquelon)

The final changes to the French infantry uniform appear in these two official photographs. On the left, barracks dress, with the 1935-pattern khaki shirt, dark khaki tie, 1938 'golf' trousers and 1918-pattern side-cap, unchanged since the last war. On the right, the 1938 single-breasted *capote*, 1940-pattern lace-up leather infantry leggings, 1935 mod. 37 equipment and the MAS36 rifle. The back view of this equipment can be seen on p.34.

1940, muffled in his heavy, hot coat, looked ready to fight the Great War once again.

In general terms, the French uniform of 1939-40 can be considered old-fashioned and ill-adapted to modern warfare. The only exceptions were in two specialised areas of dress: motorcyclists' clothing (see Plate E3) and, particularly, mountain clothing (see Plates F1 and F2), where significant and ground-breaking advances had been made.

Just before the war, Captain Pourchier, commandant of the Mountain Warfare School (*Ecole de Haute Montagne*) in Chamonix until 1939, had perfected an entirely new uniform, based on the layering system. According to the air temperature, the individual soldier was free to put on or take off one of a number of lightweight items of clothing. The *capote* and *vareuse* were abandoned in favour of a number of woollen pullovers, with and without sleeves, worn in their turn underneath a canvas anorak (*blouson de skieur*) with chest pockets, which was to be the principal uniform of the mountain soldier (see Plate F1). For greater warmth, the individual soldier could also wear additional items of warm clothing on top of the anorak during operations at altitude (items cut short enough to allow free movement - see Plate F2). For walking-out, he could wear the traditional hooded cape of Alpine troops (introduced in 1935, in khaki cloth, for motorised troops as well). The 1940-pattern Pourchier system, combined with several items taken from the uniform of motorised troops, was used by the men of the French Expeditionary Force to Scandinavia(CEFS), where its excellent qualities were much appreciated.

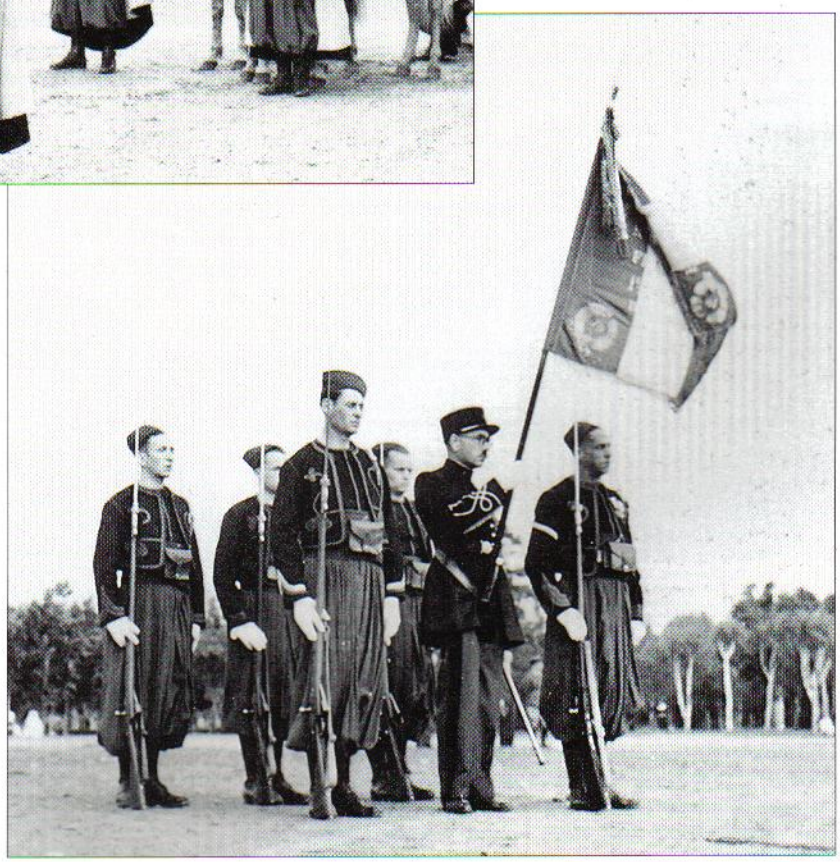
Officers' dress and traditional dress

Officers and senior NCOs, who bought their own uniform, were permitted to wear the new khaki uniforms from December 1925. This explains why, in so many inter-war photos, officers appear in khaki service dress while the men are still clad in horizon blue.

Officers had two basic uniforms – full dress and service dress. For full dress, and for walking-out, officers wore a long tunic with an upright collar, and trousers which, from May 1931, were in their pre-1914 colours (see Plate A1). Service dress consisted of a khaki *vareuse* with four pockets and, under English influence, fawn breeches (see Plate E2). The *vareuse* had a pointed collar, introduced in 1929. Although this was replaced in May 1938 by an open collar, revealing a shirt and tie (see Plate G2), both types were seen in 1939-40. In the field, the *vareuse* was usually worn under a *manteau* (see Plate B1).

Despite these general regulations, the traditions of individual arms-of-service created a surprising number of exceptions. After the general introduction of khaki, the chasseurs managed to retain their traditional dark blue uniform, even in the field (see Plate B3). The heavily braided pre-1914 uniform of African troops was reintroduced in its entirety in November 1927 (see Plate A3), although only for parades and walking-out where it was thought to act as an incentive to recruitment. In February 1928, colonial troops also saw the reintroduction of their dark blue pre-1914 walking-out uniform. This comprised a double-breasted tunic (*paletot*) with an upright collar, and trousers with scarlet piping (infantry) or a wide scarlet double stripe and piping (artillery). On campaign, however, all these items were replaced by khaki.

LEFT **Wearing their characteristic *rezzas*, Moroccan spahis had a full dress uniform that was quite different from that of their Algerian and Tunisian counterparts (see Plate C). Their *burnous*, although identical in cut, was dark blue from June 1924 onwards. In February 1931 the uniform worn only briefly in 1913 was re-introduced as full dress: it consisted of a garance jacket of European cut with nine buttons and a turn-down collar, and wide sky blue trousers with separate legs.**



RIGHT **The colour party of the 1er Zouaves, early 1939. The sous-lieutenant carrying the colour wears the special 1931-pattern zouave uniform – a black tunic without epaulettes, and with rank distinctions in elongated Austrian knots. The others are in 'oriental' full dress. Re-introduced in 1927, it was virtually identical to that worn at all times prior to 1914.**

II – Képis, braid (metal) and buttons

Arm-of-service	*Képi band*	*Képi top*[1]	*Braid*[2]	*Button device*[3]
I – METROPOLITAN TROOPS				
(North African troops are always described as part of the metropolitan troops)				
Metropolitan infantry[4]	dark blue	garance	gold	grenade
Chasseurs à pied/alpins	black velvet[5]	dark blue	silver	horn
Zouaves	dark blue	garance	gold	none
Tirailleurs[6]	sky blue	garance	gold	none
African light infantry	dark blue	garance	silver	horn in a fleuron
Foreign Legion inf.	dark blue	garance	gold	*Légion Etrangère* motto
Tanks	black velvet[5]	dark blue	silver	cannons and knight's helmet
Cuirassiers	dark blue	garance	silver	grenade
Dragoons	dark blue	garance	silver	none
Light cavalry[7]	sky blue	garance	silver	none
Spahis	sky blue	garance	gold	none
Saharan companies	sky blue	sky blue	gold	none
Foreign Legion cav.	dark blue	garance	silver	*Légion Etrangère* motto
Artillery	dark blue	dark blue	gold	grenade over cannons
Engineers[8]	dark blue	dark blue	gold	cuirass and siege helmet
Train	dark blue	garance	silver	none
II – METROPOLITAN SERVICES				
(officers and equivalent only; see detail of service on Table IV)				
Supply	dark blue	garance	silver	wreath on crossed flags
Doctors	crimson velvet	garance	gold	caduceus and wreath
Dentists	plum velvet	garance	gold	caduceus and wreath
Pharmacists	green velvet	garance	gold	caduceus and wreath
Justice advocates	dark blue	dark blue	gold	fasces on crossed flags
Justice clerks/wardens	dark blue	garance	gold	none
Veterinaries	garnet velvet	garance	gold	flags on fasces + wreath
Administration	dark blue	garance	gold	none
Interpreters (in Arabic)	ultr. blue velvet	garance	gold	none
Interpreters (non-Arabic)	dark blue	garance	gold	grenade
Powder engineers	mouse grey	dark blue	gold	winged flame fasces
Powder agents	dark blue	dark blue	gold	winged flame fasces
Armaments engineers	dark blue	dark blue	gold	same as collar patch (IV)
Armaments administr.	dark blue	dark blue	silver	same as collar patch (IV)
Treasury service	dark green	dark green	silver	*Trésor aux Armées* motto
Postal service	black	dark blue	silver	*Poste aux Armées* motto
Geographical service	dark blue	dark blue	gold	none
III – COLONIAL TROOPS AND SERVICES				
Infantry/artillery	dark blue	dark blue	gold	anchor and fleuron
Supply *(officers)*	dark blue	dark blue	silver	anchor and fleuron
Doctors *(officers)*	crimson velvet	dark blue	gold	anchor and fleuron
Pharmacists *(officers)*	green velvet	dark blue	gold	anchor and fleuron
Administration *(off.)*	dark blue	dark blue	gold	anchor and fleuron

Notes

1. The regular 'dark blue' was to be seen only on képis issued during peacetime to junior NCOs and (when applicable, see Table III, note *) to other ranks. It was black for officers and senior NCOs. Similarly, the regular 'sky blue' (i.e. slightly darker than horizon blue) was to be seen only on junior NCOs' and ORs' képis. Officers and senior NCOs used a very light shade of sky blue.
2. Juniors NCOs' and ORs' képis (when applicable, see Table III) did not have metal braid, but piping in the same colour as the képi band, with the following exceptions: yellow piping for chasseurs and African light infantry, green piping for tanks, red piping for artillery, engineers and all Colonial troops.
3. Same metal as braid. The device was worn only by officers and *adjudants*. Lower ranks had the plain half-ball type, either gilt or silvered (NCOs), or tombac or tin (ORs, see Table I). On campaign dress garments (which excludes the képi) buttons were supposedly matt dark khaki for all ranks.
4. All pre-war troops (line, fortress, Alpine), and any raised only after mobilisation (machine gun battalions, Pyrenean chasseurs, etc.).
5. Officers and *adjudants* only. Lower ranks' képis had a dark blue cloth band.
6. Including officers and NCOs of Levant infantry battalions. Some of them wore a distinctive five-pointed Austrian knot, instead of the usual four-pointed knot.
7. All light cavalry except spahis, but including officers and NCOs of Levant cavalry squadrons. Although not in regulations, GRCA officers wore the 'heavy cavalry' dark blue képi, and GRDI officers the light cavalry one.
8. Same képi for railway, telegraph and electrical units, with appropriate device (same as collar patch device, see Table IV,Section IV) on the képi front.

Caporal-chef radio operator, 24e RI from Paris, in the piped walking-out dress and 1935-pattern képi with the number embroidered in gold wire, and gold chin-strap. The specialisation badge (TSF = *télégraphie sans fil*, or wireless) is sewn over the diagonal gold braid which is part of the rank badge in this order of dress. Metal regimental badges, here on the chest, had become common in many units from the 1930s onwards. (Coll. Eric Lefèvre)

Headgear

The item of headgear that most symbolises the French Army is the *képi*. It was first issued in its modern form (a flat-topped rigid cylinder around 10cm high) as the officers' 1919-pattern. Colours differed according to the arm-of-service of the wearer (see Table II). The unit number or a branch device was usually, but not always (again depending on the arm-of-service), displayed on the front. For officers and adjudants, an Austrian knot on the top of the képi, and lines of thin tubular braid around the crown indicated rank. From 1920, re-enlisting NCOs received an officers' pattern képi, but without the knot or braid. From 1926 the képi was authorised for successive ranks, until by 1930 it was prescribed for all, except in units that had their own traditional head-dress.

Except for generals, who had a khaki pattern with stars on the front, the képi did not form part of campaign dress, where it was replaced by the sharply pointed 1918-pattern side-cap (*bonnet de police*). In theory, the side-cap was issued in a single pattern for all ranks; in practice, however, officers wore a well-tailored version, in finer cloth (see Plate B1). In units with a traditional head-dress, the képi was worn only by French officers and NCOs, while ORs were issued with the beret or the *chéchia* instead of the *bonnet de police* (see Table III).

The principal headgear worn with campaign dress was the steel helmet – in 1939 the pattern most frequently seen was the M1926. The direct descendant of the famous Adrian helmet, it was stamped from a single piece of manganese steel, with the crest in either aluminium or steel and, on the front, a badge to indicate the arm-of-service of the wearer (see Table III and MAA 286 p.20). Motorised troops wore either the 1935-pattern helmet, which in-

The 1936-pattern helmet for anti-aircraft units, here being worn by a young brigadier-chef, featured a flat brow band and cut-outs around the ears to accommodate the head-phones of the sound detection equipment.

III – Field head-dress and insignia 1939-40

Arm-of-service	*Field service head-dress*[1]	*Field service head-dress insignia or feature*	*Steel helmet badge*[2]
Line infantry	sidecap		grenade
North-East fortress inf.	dark khaki beret[3]	*'On ne passe pas'* crest	grenade
Alpine infantry	Alpine beret	garance grenade	grenade
Alpine fortress inf.	Alpine beret	*'On ne passe pas'* crest	grenade
Chasseurs à pied	dark blue sidecap		horn
Chasseurs alpins	Alpine beret	yellow horn	horn
Pyrenean chasseurs	Basque beret[5]	(garance horn ?)	grenade or horn
Zouaves	crimson *chéchia*		crescent
North Afr. tirailleurs	crimson *chéchia*, or light khaki *chèche*		crescent
African Light Infantry	sidecap		horn
Foreign Leg. (inf./cav.)	sidecap[4]		grenade
Tanks	dark blue beret[5]	knight's helmet on crossed cannons[6]	
Metropolitan cavalry	sidecap		grenade
Armoured cars	sidecap		Minerva's face on sun
Chasseurs d'Afrique	garance *chéchia* with three black bands		grenade
Spahis/ Saharan Cies	tall crimson *chéchia*, or *chèche*		crescent
Artillery	sidecap[7]		grenade on crossed cannons
Engineers	sidecap[7]		cuirass and siege helmet
Train	sidecap[7]		grenade
Colonial troops (Eur.)	sidecap		anchor
Colonial troops (Local)	crimson *chéchia*		anchor
Supply (officers only)	sidecap		fasces, wreath and flags
Medical corps (all pers.)	sidecap		caduceus and wreath
Other services	sidecap		grenade[8]

Notes

1. Colour was standard khaki, unless otherwise stated. The units wearing sidecaps were those which were issued képis for all ranks during peacetime.
2. Either M1915 cut-out types (see MAA 256 p. 20), or M 1937 types on 2 in. discs.
3. Smaller in size than the Alpine type. Many reservists received standard sidecaps (some with *On ne passe pas* crest instead of the beret.
4. Except 13e DBLE which, as a mountain unit, received a beret: in this case, that of the North-East fortress units.
5. Smaller in size than the Alpine type.
6. On beret, voided, antiqued silver finish. On steel helmet, stamped on a disc.
7. Except units belonging to fortress troops, Alpine troops or African troops which wore the appropriate field service headdress (beret or *chéchia*).
8. Except railway, telegraph and electrical units which received the engineers' badge. Several helmet badges for services were also created by the 1936 Regulations, but they don't seem to have been produced.

cluded a padded brow band but no crest (see Plates E1 to E3), or the earlier models with a flat band and a small crest. Finally, anti-aircraft artillery and the crews of the infantry's Oerlikon machine guns received the 1936-pattern helmet, which was based on the 1935 version. It was worn with either the artillery or infantry badge as appropriate.

Overseas, the 1931-pattern cork sun helmet, covered with light khaki cloth, was often worn on campaign by both Europeans and Indochinese troops. By regulation no badges were worn on the front, except for the gilt star and crescent of the Saharan Companies, or the gilt anchor of Colonial troops (see Plates G1 and G2).

Insignia

The principal insignia of the French Army were the collar patches – worn on *vareuse*, *capote*, *manteau* and all specialist protective clothing – which clearly identified the arm-of-service of the wearer. This system of identification dated back to December 1914, when the standard horizon blue uniform succeeded a whole variety of older patterns, and continued to develop until 1940. Each arm-of-service had its own background colour (except in the infantry, where it matched the colour of the garment); the different branches were then identified by the colour of the soutaches (the distinction of combatant units) arranged in chevrons. The number of the unit and/or its ornamental device lay in the centre of the patch (see Table IV).

The light khaki *chéchia* cover was worn throughout 1939 and 1940. In regiments that did not have this item it was replaced by a rolled-up *chèche*, which left the top of the red *chéchia* visible.

IV – Service dress collar patches 1939-40

Arm-of-service	*Patch*	*Soutaches*[1]	*Unit number*[2]	*Additional device*[2]
I – METROPOLITAN TROOPS				
Line and Fortress inf.	khaki	2 dark blue	dark blue[3]	
Alpine Fortress inf.	khaki	3 dark blue	dark blue[3]	
Chasseurs greatcoat	khaki	2 green	green	horn
à pied/alpins other	dark blue	2 yellow	yellow	horn
Zouaves	khaki	2 garance	garance	
Alg./Tun. tirailleurs	khaki	2 sky blue	sky blue	
Moroccan tirailleurs	khaki	2 sky blue	sky blue	star
African light inf.	khaki	2 violet	violet	
Foreign Legion inf.	khaki	2 green	green	
Tanks	khaki	2 light grey	light grey	
(from April 1940)	dark blue	2 light grey	green	grenade
Tank workshops	khaki	none	light grey	
Pyrenean Chasseurs	khaki	2 blue	blue	horn
Machine Gun Btns	khaki	2 yellow	yellow	
Pioneers	khaki	none	dark blue	
Regional Rgts	khaki	2 white	dark blue	
Cuirassiers (horsed)	dark blue	2 garance	garance	
Mechanised cuirassiers	dark blue	2 garance, 1 violet	garance	
Dragoons (horsed)	dark blue	2 white	white[3]	
Mot. dragoons (w.out)	dark blue	2 white, 1 violet	garance	
Mot. dragoons (field)	dark blue	2 white	white	star
Armoured cars	dark blue	2 violet	violet[3]	
Chasseurs à cheval	dark blue	2 light green	light green[3]	
Hussars	dark blue	2 sky blue	sky blue[3]	
GRCA	dark blue	3 white	white	
GRDI	dark blue	3 green	green	
Chasseurs d'Afrique	dark blue	2 yellow	yellow	
Alg./Tun. spahis	dark blue	2 yellow	yellow	
Moroccan spahis	dark blue	2 yellow	yellow	outlined star
Saharan companies	dark blue	2 yellow	none	yellow star + crescent
Foreign Legion cav.	dark blue	2 light green	light green	grenade
Cavalry depots	dark blue	3 garance	garance	
Schools cavalrymen	dark blue	2 sky blue	sky blue	grenade
Remounts	dark blue	none	sky blue[3]	
Artillery Rgts	scarlet	2 dark blue	dark blue	
Artillery Groups	scarlet	3 dark blue	dark blue	
Artillery of Cav.Div	scarlet	2 dark blue	dark blue	star
Artillery workshops	scarlet	none	yellow	
Engineers	black velvet	2 scarlet[5]	scarlet[5]	
Forest engineers	black velvet	2 scarlet	scarlet	horn
Train	green	none[4]	garance	
Administration	light grey	none	garance	
Medical Orderlies	garance	none	horizon blue	
II – COLONIAL TROOPS				
RIC (European)	khaki	2 scarlet	scarlet[6]	anchor
Local infantry units	khaki	2 yellow[7]	yellow[6]	anchor
Artillery (European)	scarlet	2 dark blue	dark blue[6]	anchor
Artillery (Local pers.)	scarlet	2 yellow[7]	yellow[6]	anchor
III – LEVANT SPECIAL TROOPS				
Lebanese chasseurs	violet	2 yellow	yellow	cedar tree
Syrian infantry Btns	violet	2 yellow	yellow	crescent
Syrian cavalry Sqdns	violet	2 sky blue	sky blue	crescent
Circassian Sqdns	sky blue	none	none	silver grenade
Druze Sqdns	violet	2 sky blue	variable	grenade
Levant light armd cars	violet	2 sky blue	sky blue	star
Meharist Cos	violet	2 yellow	yellow	star + crescent
Artillery	violet	2 scarlet	none,	scarlet grenade + crescent
Engineers	violet	2 black	black	grenade + crescent
Train	violet	none	green	crescent

Service	*Patch*[8]	*Ornamental device*[8]
IV – METROPOLITAN SERVICES		
Supply	khaki cloth	silver acanthus sprig
Medical Corps *(corps de santé militaire)*		
Doctors	crimson velvet	gold caduceus and oak/laurel wreath
Dentists	plum velvet	the same
Pharmacists	green velvet	the same
Military Justice *(corps autonome de la justice militaire)*		
Prosecutors	black velvet	gold fasces in a gold oak wreath
Defenders	black velvet	gold fasces in a silver oak wreath
Clerks/wardens	black velvet	gold grenade and wreath
Veterinaries	garnet velvet	silver sage wreath
Administration *(corps des officiers d'administration)*		
- of Supply	khaki cloth	gold grenade and olive tree wreath
- of Medic. Corps	crimson velvet	the same
Interpreters *(corps des interprètes militaires)*		
- Arabic	ultram. blue velvet	gold grenade over a crescent
- other languages	dark blue cloth	gold grenade
Powder service *(service des poudres)*; agents only[9]		
Chemists	dark blue velvet	gold winged flame fasces
Technicians	scarlet velvet	with lightning flash, the same
Accountants	green velvet	for all agents
Armaments Production *(service des fabrications d'armement)*		
Engineers	scarlet cloth	gold crossed cannon barrels and sword, within a wreath of flames
Works and admin.	black velvet	the same but in silver
Military Railways *(service militaire des chemins de fer)*		
Directorate personnel	khaki cloth	a railway wheel within an oak and/or olive tree wreath, in combinations of gold or silver according to service
Field sections	khaki cloth	gold (or scarlet for ORs) number
Telegraphists *(corps spécial de la télégraphie militaire)*		
Directorate, GHQ, and Army group technicians	black velvet with 2 scarlet soutaches	gold star and lightning flashes. Field detachments also have their unit number in gold under the star
Electricians	black velvet with 2 green soutaches	gold section number and lightning flashes
Treasury service	dark khaki cloth	silver oak sprig
Postal service	khaki cloth	silver myosotis sprig
Geographical service	orange cloth with 2 dark blue soutaches and gold grenade	
V – COLONIAL SERVICES		
Supply off., doctors and pharmacists		as their metropolitan counterparts
Administr. of Supply	khaki cloth	gold five-pointed star and anchor
Admin. of Medical Corps	crimson velvet	gold ten-pointed star and anchor
Colonial clerks (NCOs and ORs, European and native)		
- administration	khaki cloth	scarlet five-pointed star
- medical orderlies	khaki cloth	scarlet caduceus and wreath
- staff clerks	khaki cloth	scarlet winged lightning bolt
- telegraphists	khaki cloth	scarlet star and lightning flashes

Notes

1. Up to 1940, collar patches with three soutaches identified units that either were independent or needed an additional distinction. From 1941, the three soutaches identified any unit garrisoned or raised in North Africa.
2. For officers and senior NCOs, the regimental number was always embroidered in gold or silver, according to the button and braid metal. The additional device (if any) was always in the colour (or metal) of the number.
3. Garance number for other ranks in M'1935 walking-out dress.
4. Two garance soutaches from 1941, after the Train acquired combatant status.
5. From July 1942, sky blue soutaches and number for Transmission (ex-engineers) units.
6. The regimental (or machine gun battalion) number was worn only for units serving in France, North Africa and the Levant. All units garrisoned anywhere else in the Colonial Empire had no number and a bigger anchor.
7. Accompanied the abolition of the yellow braid around the collar and cuffs of the 'local troops' paletot (a new regulation of July 1939, and seldom seen).
8. As they identify non-combatant services, these patches do not bear either soutaches or unit number (with the exceptions noted).
9. Powder service engineers only had the full dress uniform (worn with mouse grey képi).

With few exceptions, the system of rank badges in force for campaign dress in 1939-40 had hardly changed from that used during the Great War (see MAA 286, Table p.17, horizon blue uniforms[1]). In 1928, however, the ranks of junior NCOs were altered: the rank of *caporal-chef/brigadier-chef* (two bars of woollen braid below one of metallic braid,

1 But note that the ranks of *général de corps d'armée* (four stars) and *général d'armée* (five stars) were not created until March 1921. The rank *général de groupes d'armées* (six stars) never existed.

1: Colonel, 1er Régiment de Dragons Portés, 1938
2: Sapper, 172e Régiment d'Infanterie de Forteresse, Strasbourg, 1939
3: Brigadier, Algerian spahis, full dress, Oran, 1939

1: Chef de bataillon, 92e RI, campaign dress, 1939-40
2: Patrol member, light campaign order, spring 1940
3: Chasseur à pied, campaign dress, 1939-40

1: Tirailleur algérien, campaign dress, spring 1940
2: Moroccan groupe franc, winter 1939-40
3: Tirailleur sénégalais, garrison dress, 1939-40

1: Trooper, 6e Régiment de Dragons, dismounted combat order, 1939-40
2: Brigadier, 4e Régiment de Spahis Marocains, winter campaign dress, 1939-40
3: Mounted artilleryman, winter 1939-40

1: Cavalry AFV crew, campaign dress 1939-40
2: Captain, Chars de combat, campaign dress 1939-40
3: Cavalry motorcyclist, 11^{e} GRCA, campaign dress 1939-40

1: Chasseur alpin, Norway Expedition, reduced campaign order, 1940
2: Légionnaire, 13e DBLE, Norway, 1940
3: Ski scout, Army of the Alps, 1939

1: Corporal, 24e Régiment Mixte d'Infanterie Coloniale, the Levant, 1940
2: Lieutenant, 5e Régiment Etranger d'Infanterie, Tonkin, campaign dress, 1941
3: Sergeant, 1er Régiment de Zouaves, Algiers, 1935-42

1: Colonial infantry, Madagascar, 1942
2: Adjutant-chef, cavalry, Southern France, 1942
3: Infantry, Vichy, Summer 1942

LEFT **To keep the collar patches safe from the prying eyes of the 'fifth column', buttoned security patches were adopted in April 1939, and added to all garments carrying numbers. In the event, they were only supplied systematically on 1938-pattern garments. Older uniforms (like the 1920-pattern *capote* shown here) had the security patches added, rather haphazardly, at regimental level.**

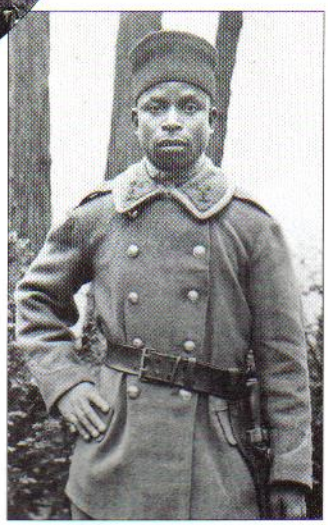
The *rezza*, the full dress head-dress of Moroccan troops, was made from a *chèche*, carefully wound over a skull cap, with ribbons added at the base, alternately in white and in distinctive colours, to identify companies and battalions.

see Plate D3) was added between corporal and sergeant. A distinction was also made between those *sergents/maréchaux des logis* who were simply serving out their time (one bar of metallic braid, see Plate G3), and those who had re-enlisted (two bars). A new rank of *sergent-chef/maréchal des logis-chef* was created, with three bars of metallic braid. On campaign dress, junior NCOs' badges were in a dark khaki-green wool (in the Tanks and the Legion, they were dark green). Table I shows the colours of the wool braid for walking-out dress, Table II the metallic braid. On cotton, canvas and leather uniforms, other than the standard summer tunic, the rank badges appeared on a patch, buttoned to the chest. Rank was also displayed on the képi, and on the bonnet de police in chevrons. In principle, no other headgear should have borne a rank badge. (N.B. in the French Army 'other ranks' included corporals and soldiers de 1re classe; only sergeants and above were non-commissioned officers)

Other insignia worn in the Army included the lanyard (*fourragère*) introduced in April 1916 (see MAA 286), the specialisation badges and armlets both sewn onto the upper left sleeve.

Field equipment

Despite a number of trials in the years before 1914, the infantryman's individual equipment underwent no significant changes throughout World War I. From late 1914, the basic elements (waistbelt, cartridge pouches and leather equipment braces) were left natural, rather than



This soldier, photographed in 1931, served with the 42e Régiment (later Bataillon) de mitrailleurs malgaches. His paletot, with jonquil yellow braid at collar and cuffs, is of the same pattern as that of Senegalese troops, but until 1933, the colour of the number and anchor on the collar of Malagasy units was green.

In 1939, many infantry regiments were still using old equipment, unchanged since the First World War, including the wooden-framed 1893-pattern pack and the third dorsal ammunition pouch, both clearly visible here. (Coll. P. Brétégnier)

ABOVE **The 1935-pattern equipment is shown here in combat order (i.e. without the lower pack), worn low down the back to allow the MAS36 rifle to be slung across the shoulders. On the left can be seen the new ANP31 (ANP – appareil normal de protection), with a rubber tube and filter carried in a haversack, following British practice. The APNP 31 was in universal use in 1939-40. Here the ANP 31 haversack almost completely hides the 1935-pattern water-bottle, which had only one spout.**

blackened, while the textile parts of the pack and other items were made from a grey-green canvas (changed to khaki in 1929).

Thanks to a special emergency budget in 1925-26, the excellent Chatellerault FM 1924 machine gun was introduced into the Army. Only then was a new range of equipment adopted, which included a special pack and haversack, to replace those used with its predecessor, the Chauchat. This new equipment was distributed among the men of the infantry section, and was worn with the standard items according to a complex scheme (see Table V). However, real root-and-branch change to infantry equipment came only as the result of trials held by a Captain Gigon in 1930 with the 27^{e} RI at Dijon. These attempted not only to standardise the infantryman's equipment, but also, as in the pre-1914 trials, to lighten it as well. The first step on this path was taken in June 1934, with the introduction of the 'personal pack' (*ballot individuel*) – a simple 1861-pattern haversack containing spare underclothing, soap and a towel – to be carried on company transport.

Modifications were introduced at the same time to some existing items of equipment: instead of being slung over the shoulder, the haversack and water-bottle were now worn below the cartridge pouches on shortened straps suspended from a belt loop in the small of the back, replacing the third cartridge pouch previously worn there. The straps of the pack were also lengthened, to allow it to be worn further down the back, enabling specialists, such as bombers, machine gun and heavy weapons crews, to sling their rifles across their chests whenever they needed both hands free.

These same ideas dominated the development of the completely redesigned 1935-pattern equipment. Consisting of a soft pack in two sections (the lower one containing the change of clothing, and in theory carried on company transport), it had no straps constricting the chest. Further, the new upper pack was integrated with the cartridge pouches by means of hooks, thus acting as a counter-balance, following the system

used in other countries since the beginning of the century. Most particularly, this new equipment was intended to be standard for every soldier, irrespective of his role or weapon: the side pockets of the upper pack and the outside pockets of the new haversack could accommodate packets of cartridges, machine gun magazines, grenades and all kinds of implements. Even so, although real progress had been made, the 1935 equipment remained a heavy burden.

For mountain troops, Captain Pourchier adopted equipment based on different principles. The front cartridge pouches were worn on the waistbelt, without any braces. A Bergen rucksack with a detachable haversack was attached to the pouches by loops attached to its own straps, and a kit bag (the motorised troops' 1935-pattern), always left in the rear, contained any remaining clothes. In combat, only the detachable haversack was carried. This was a very light combat order, but it presupposed good logistical organisation and a degree of mechanisation that was largely absent from the Army of 1940.

This official photo shows a number of items from the 1940 pattern uniform specific to ski-scouts and high mountain troops: Gaiters (here, a prototype – as issued, they would be longer in the leg), cloth skier's trousers and canvas anorak. The 1940 mountain rucksack is that used on the Norway expedition, and featured two large pockets on the side and a detachable haversack.

V – Section (*groupe de combat*) 1939-40

Personnel	*Weapon*	*Ammunition* [1]	*Main equipment*	*Entrenching tool*
I - INFANTRY with combination of old and M24 equipment				
Sergeant, section leader	rifle	45 x 8mm 25 x 7.5mm	standard [2]	shears
Corporal, 2-i-c	rifle	45 x 8mm 50 x 7.5mm	standard [2] + M24 haversack	axe
Machine gunner	FM 24/29	75 x 7.5mm	standard [3] + M24 haversack	M1879 spade
MG no. 2	Ruby pistol	3 x 7.65 mag. 325 x 7.5mm	M24 knapsack [4] + M24 haversack	M09 pick-shovel
3 Ammo carriers (per man)	carbine	45 x 8mm 250 x 7.5mm	standard [5] + M24 knapsack	2 M1879 spades 1 billhook
4 Riflemen (per man)	rifle 25 x 7.5mm	90 x 8mm	standard [2]	2 M16 pickaxes 2 M16 shovels
Rifle grenadier	rifle - grenade launcher	8 x VB gren.	standard [2] + VB pouch	M09 pick-shovel

II – INFANTRY with M35 equipment and old 8mm weapons

The standard M35 equipment was issued to each man, except that the MG number 2 had his right-side cartridge pouch replaced by a pistol holster. M35 haversack was carried on the left hip, and waterbottle on the right. Same combination of armament and tools as above. The same total of FM ammo (1,325 rounds) was more evenly distributed (250 rounds to the MG no.2, 75 each to the sergeant and corporal).

III – INFANTRY with M35 equipment and MAS 36 rifle

The M35 equipment was distributed as quoted in II but, as the MAS36 had its bayonet stored inside the rifle stock, no bayonet holder was worn and every man was supposed to carry his M35 haversack on the right hip and waterbottle on the left. Same combination of tools as above. In theory, the rifle grenadier should have disappeared by 1940 (a 50mm M37 grenade-launcher was planned at platoon level), but this had not happened before the German onslaught.

Notes

1. All 7.5mm cartridges were stored in magazines of 25 rounds, except that each ammo carrier carried 4 full magazines (100 rounds) and 2 bags of 75 loose cartridges each.
2. I.e. three M16 cartridge pouches and appropriate bayonet frog on the belt, M1892/14 suspension braces, M1893/14 knapsack with wooden frame, M1861 haversack hanging on left hip, 2-litre waterbottle on right hip. This equipment could be the standard one or the 'modified 34' one (in this case, no back cartridge pouch; extra cartridges were stored in the knapsack).
3. Same equipment as in Note 2 but without bayonet frog (prior to 1937, a pistol with a M1916 pistol holster was also worn by the machine gunner).
4. Same basic equipment as in Note 3 except that a pistol holster replaced the front right cartridge pouch, and that the M24 knapsack replaced the ordinary knapsack.
5. Same as in Note 2, except that the M24 knapsack replaced the ordinary knapsack.

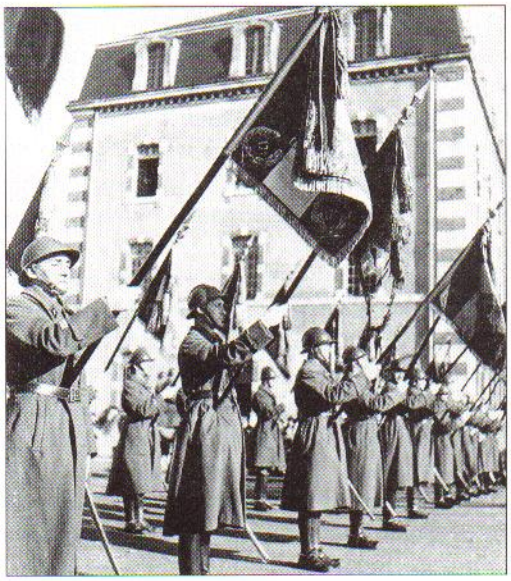
Small arms

With the accelerated distribution of the 7.5mm calibre FM24 – which became the FM24/29 after the introduction of the shortened 1929C cartridge – the difficulty of carrying two calibres of ammunition within each section (see Table 5) meant that a replacement for the older 8mm calibre rifles became a matter of urgency. After years of trials, two new 7.5mm rifles were adopted. One was the 1907/15 M34, an elegant Berthier modified to the Mauser system. The other was the famous MAS36, which, entirely new, simple and functional, was where the future lay. In fact, the MAS36 (produced at 250,000 until June 1940) was just one step towards a semi-automatic rifle, the FA MAS40, which was intended to go into mass production from 1941. The remaining small arms comprised, at best, the 1907/15 M16 rifles and 1892 M16 carbines, which took five-round clips on the Berthier system. At the worst, it was still possible to find 1886/93 Lebel rifles and, in local defence units, 11mm Gras 1874 weapons!

Handguns were essentially those of the Great War: the 8mm 1892 and the Spanish 92 revolvers, or Ruby and Star pistols, which were also Spanish made. The new 7.65mm automatics, the 35A and 35S, were not, it has to be said, a priority in re-armament, when there were so many other pressing needs. This was also true for sub-machine guns: the French 7.65mm MAS38 had hardly begun production in May 1940. *Groupes francs* used more powerful weapons such as the 9mm Erma-Vollmer (see Plate C2) and several American 11.43mm Thompsons, but few of the latter had been distributed before the Armistice.

The 8mm 1914 pattern Hotchkiss heavy machine gun was supplemented by several hundred Swiss Oerlikon CA39 20mm anti-aircraft machine guns. The 60mm and 81mm Brandt mortar, and the 25mm 1934 Hotchkiss and 1937 Puteaux anti-tank guns completed the inventory of infantry heavy weapons.

LEFT **Parading through a small town, some of these infantrymen have been issued with 'golf' trousers, the 1935 mod. 37 equipment, and the MAS36 rifle. In the first rank are the section leaders (sergeants); behind them are the FM24/29 gunners; they in turn are followed by their Number Twos, hands on holsters – a pistol was their only weapon.**



THE ARMY OF THE ARMISTICE 1940-42

Just as at the end of World War One, when Germany was allowed to maintain a 100,000-man Reichswehr, the Armistice of 25 June 1940 allowed France a small metropolitan defence force of the same size (84,000 for the Army, 6,000 for the *Garde* – ex-Mobile Republican Guard, and 10,000 for the Navy and Air Force) with the sole purpose of maintaining public order. Stationed in the Free Zone – the south of France and Corsica – the Army of the Armistice was divided into two *groupes de divisions militaires*, themselves divided into four *divisions militaires* (DM), which replaced the old military regions of the same number (see Table 8). Each DM had the same organisation as a 1939 infantry division, but with much reduced means: anti-tank and gas protection equipment were banned, and mechanisation reduced to a minimum. However, the smaller number of effectives permitted nearly all to be armed with the new MAS36 rifle, whilst the MAS38 and Thompson sub-machine guns were also more plentiful (theoretically, six per platoon), and the 50mm 1937-pattern grenade launcher made its first appearance (in theory three per platoon, progressively replacing the VB rifle grenade).

In the infantry, each battalion (now composed of four mixed rifle and machine gun companies) could deploy 26 FM24/29 rifles, 16 Hotchkiss machine guns, 36 x 50mm grenade launchers/VBs, three 60mm mortars and three 81mm mortars.

In the cavalry, cuirassiers and dragoons were organised into reconnaissance groups, comprising two mounted squadrons, three cyclist squadrons (with 15 Hotchkiss machine guns and ten 81mm mortars), and one squadron of eight Panhard AMD armoured cars carrying a second 7.5mm machine gun to replace their anti-tank gun. The chasseurs and hussars resumed their traditional role as horsed cavalry, with four sabre squadrons and one heavy weapons squadron armed with 12 Hotchkiss machine guns and four 81mm mortars.

The artillery, meanwhile, was restricted to 75mm calibre weapons

ABOVE LEFT **The Army of the Armistice did its utmost to keep up the traditions of the pre-war army in difficult political circumstances. The Saumur Cavalry School, relocated to Tarbes in the south-west of France after its fierce fighting on the River Loire in June 1940, received the standards of 26 disbanded cavalry regiments on 19 January 1942.**

ABOVE RIGHT **One of the great reforms undertaken by the Army of the Armistice was its emphasis on sport. A PT kit, consisting of a khaki short-sleeved shirt, shorts and plimsolls, was introduced for all ranks in January 1941. The shirt was decorated with a tricolour shield, which bore a branch symbol. Among this group, it is possible to make out the lightning flashes of the signals and the grenade of the infantry.**

The 1941 pattern uniform, during winter, consisted of a non-mounted troops double-breasted *capote* with open collar and turned-back cuffs. The very rarely seen 1941 pattern helmet, pictured here on a soldier of the 1er Régiment de France in 1943 in a press release, hardly saw any service at all. Garrisoned in the centre of France, the 1er RdF entered the war on the side of the Resistance in August 1944.

only: regiments comprised three groups of three batteries of four tubes each (in total 36 x 75mm). One battery was drawn by tractors, the rest by horses.

Each DM also included an engineer battalion (two companies and a half-company bridging train), a signals group, a transport group and a regiment of the Garde. All other support services were civilianised, in order to release the maximum number of troops for combat units.

On 11 November 1942, when the Germans invaded the Free Zone, the Army was confined to its barracks. General de Lattre de Tassigny, commanding the 16e DM, tried to order his men into defensive positions, but he was overruled by the government, and the future commander of the French Army was thrown into prison. With the exception of the Garde, the Army was demobilised on 27 November 1942 but, in the spring of 1943, the Laval government received permission to recruit a single regiment of two infantry battalions and a mixed cavalry-artillery-engineer-services battalion, which took the title of 1er Régiment de France.

Overseas, the situation of the Vichy forces was somewhat different. Whilst the Italians, in particular, pressed for the

8 – Army of the Armistice in France, North Africa and Levant

Formation	*HQ*	*Infantry*	*Cavalry*	*Artillery*
I - In Southern France *(Summer 1940 to November 1942; disbanded after the German invasion)*				
1er GDM	**Avignon**	(General Olry)		
7e DM	Bourg-en-B.	65e, 151e RI, 4e [1er, 2e, 10e] DBCP	5e RD	61e RA
14e DM	Lyon	153e, 159e RI, 3e [6e, 13e, 27e] DBCA	11e RC	2e RAM
15e DM	Marseille	43e RIA, 21e RIC, 173e BCorse. 2e [20e, 24e, 25e] DBCA	12e RC	10e RAC
16e DM	Montpellier	8e, 51e RI, 2e RIC	3e RD	15e RA
	1re Brigade de Cavalerie *(horsed Rgts, attached to 1er GDM)*		1er, 7e RCh	
2e GDM	**Royat**	(General Réquin)		
9e DM	Châteauroux	1er, 27e, 32e RI	8e RC	72e RA
12e DM	Limoges	26e, 41e RI, 1re [8e, 16e, 30e] DBCP	6e RC	35e RA
13e DM	Clermont-Fd	5e, 92e, 152e RI	8e RD	4e RA
17e DM	Toulouse	18e, 23e, 150e RI	2e RD	24e RA
	2e Brigade de Cavalerie *(horsed Rgts, attached to 2e GDM)*		2e, 3e RH	
II - In North Africa *(in January 1941; several changes occurred after the Syrian campaign)*				
DTA[1]	Alger	1er RZ, 1er, 9e RTA, 13e RTS	5e RCA, 1er RSA	65e RAA
DTO[1]	Oran	2e RZ, 2e, 6e RTA, 1er REI	2e RCA, 2e RSA	66e RAA
DTC[1]	Constantine	3e RZ, 3e, 7e RTA, 15e RTS	3e RCA, 3e RSA	67e RAA
Reserves in Algeria		5e RTA, 8e RTT		68e RAA
Tunisia		4e RZ, 4e RTT, 43e RIC	4e RCA, 4e RST	62e RAA
Morocco	Fez	11e RTA, 4e, 5e RTM, 3e REI, I/8e RTS	1er REC	63e RAA
	Meknès	7e RTM, 3e REI *(elements)*	3e RSM	64e RAA
	Casablanca	1er, 6e RTM, RICM, 6e RTS	1er RCA	RACM *(3gr.)*
	Marrakech	2e RTM, 2e REI	4e RSM	RACM *(1gr.)*
Reserves in Morocco		3e, 8e RTM		
New cavalry units created in Africa in 1941		8e, 9e RCA, 10e, 11e, 12e GAPCA *(groupes autonomes portés de chas. d'Af.)*, 2e RMSA		
III - In Levant *(at the beginning of the Syrian campaign, May 1941)*				
Lebanon		22e, I+II/29e RTA, II/16e RTT, 6e REI	6e RCA, 4e GrST	RAC Levant
		I+II/24e RMIC, 1er, 2e, 3e BCL*	8e GrSA	
Syria		I+II/16e RTT, III/29e RTA, V/1er RTM,	7e RCA, 1er RSM	*e RAM Levant
		III/24e RMIC,17e RTS	4 Line + 6 Druzes	AleppoGroup*
		8 Syrian Btns* + 3 Meharist Cos*	+ 8 Circassian Sqdns*	

Notes

1. *Division territoriale d'Alger, d'Oran and de Constantine.*
* Local forces from the "*Troupes spéciales du Levant*" (BCL = Lebanese Chasseurs Battalion).

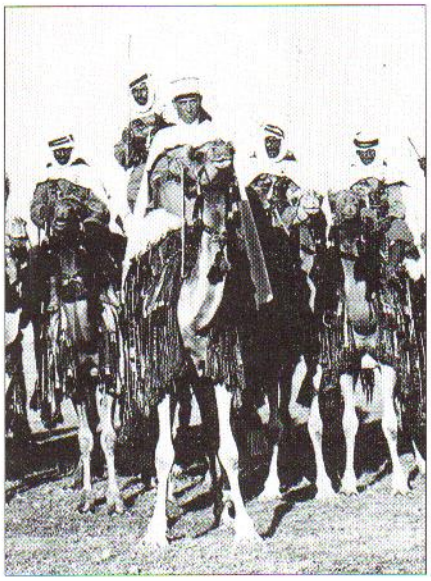
large-scale disarmament of the Armée d'Afrique (after initially imposing a limit of 30,000 men), the Germans were more flexible, particularly after the Free French reverse at Dakar in September 1940, which demonstrated to them the willingness of Vichy troops to defend the colonial empire against all aggressors, whoever they may be. After Dakar, the Germans authorised an increase in strength, allowing 120,000 men, 120 armoured cars and 102 tanks (largely D1s and R35s) in North Africa alone. On the other hand, the individual weapons of troops in Africa, unlike those available in France, were old (8mm, except for a small and insufficient quantity of FM24/29s). MAS36s, sub-machine guns and grenade launchers were almost unknown there.

The Army in North Africa was placed under the command of General Weygand from October 1940 to November 1941, and then under General Juin. Its organisation was similar to that of metropolitan units, but because of its distance from the mainland it was not as closely supervised by the German-Italian Armistice Commissions.

In Black Africa, the example of French Equatorial Africa which rallied to the Free French cause at the end of August 1940, was not followed elsewhere. The Gaullist failure before Dakar enabled the Vichy government to tighten its hold on French West Africa and to reinforce troops there, increasing numbers from 33,000 to 66,000 by October 1941, and even obtaining the release of a squadron of 23 modern Somua S35 tanks, which, as part of the 12^{e} RCA, remained on the alert in Senegal until the end of 1942.

In the Near East, the French Army had 2,400 officers and 70,000 men at the time of the Armistice (see Table 3a, p.9) – a number reduced to 25,000 by demobilisation, but then increased again at the beginning of 1941 to 38,000. These figures do not include local Lebanese or Syrian troops, officially called Special Troops of the Levant, but of no more than limited military value. In contrast, the French forces, drawn principally from North African and colonial troops, were of high quality. There were also 90 R35 tanks formerly of the 63^{e} and 68^{e} BCC, which had been taken over by the 6^{e} and 7^{e} RCA, who were already equipped with around 100 armoured cars. During the campaign of June-July 1941, these troops, although fewer in number and with obsolete equipment, proved a tough opponent for the British and Free French forces. At the end of the campaign, only 5,300 officers and men rallied to the Free French cause – 33,300 others opted for repatriation. Of these last, 11,600 went as reinforcements to North Africa at the end of 1941.

In Madagascar, the French garrison of 9,500 men (see 3a, p.9) resisted the British attack of May – October 1942. Finally, in Indochina, constant Japanese pressure, the Thailand campaign of December 1940 – January 1941 and successive local rebellions stretched French power to breaking point, permitting the success of the Japanese coup of March 1945.



The Near East local forces, officially called Special Troops of the Levant, comprised units of all branches, including highly colourful and exotic companies and squadrons. ABOVE **The Méharist Company of Dmeir at the Bastille Day Parade at Damascus, 1934. The French sergeant wears the uniform of the spahis, whilst the troopers wear a mixture of local clothes and those of the Saharan Companies. In 1941, their uniforms remained unchanged.** BELOW **The eight squadrons of the Circassian Group of the Levant Special Troops wore a Cossack-style full dress uniform.**

THE PLATES

A1: Colonel, 1er Régiment de Dragons Portés, 1938 Colonel Keime, commanding officer of the 1er RDP, garrisoned at Pontoise near Paris, is wearing the 1931 pattern full dress (*tenue* no.1). The so-called 'town dress' (*tenue de ville – tenue* no.2) included the same uniform items, but omitted the epaulettes and sabre, while medal ribbons were worn instead of the medals themselves.

The colonel is wearing an officers' 1919-pattern *képi*, identical to that worn with khaki uniforms, which bears five lines of silver tubular braid; he has a corresponding number of lines of flat braid on each cuff. The devices on the belt buckle, different for each arm-of-service, depict, for the dragoons, crossed lances on a sunburst. The remainder of the uniform consists of the 1931-pattern *tunique*, in black cloth (the regulations stated dark blue, but this use of a darker cloth had been a custom in the French Army since the previous century), garance red trousers with a wide black stripe, and polished black boots with small spurs. All the metal is silver (for the cavalry) including the finial of the *fourragère*. The latter, here in a non-regulation pattern, is in the red and green colours of the Croix de Guerre 1914-18; pinned to it is the regimental badge. The colonel's decorations commence with the most senior, the Légion d'Honneur. His sabre is the straight-bladed 1923-pattern for cavalry officers.

VI- Fortress units sleeve titles

I – Infantry *(dark blue[1] letters on khaki cloth title)*

23e RIF	Lauter	168e RIF	Moselle
37e RIF	Vosges	171e RIF	Haut-Rhin
42e RIF	Neuf-Brisach	172e RIF	Bas-Rhin
69e RIF	Haute-Seille	**South-East (Alps) Fortress**	
146e RIF	Faulquemont	70e BAF	Tarentaise
149e RIF	Crusnes	71e BAF	Maurienne
153e RIF	Sarre	72e BAF	Durance
155e RIF	Meuse	73e BAF	Ubaye
162e RIF	Nied	74e, 75e, 76e BAF	Alpes-Maritimes

II – Artillery *(dark blue[1] letters on scarlet cloth title)*

151e RAP	Montmédy, Crusnes, Boulay, Thionville, Verdun	39e RARF	Faulquemont, Crusnes, Boulay, Thionville
155e RAP	Lauter, Vosges, Sarre, Bas-Rhin, Haguenau	46e RAP	Thionville *(likely)*
159e RAP	Belfort *(likely)*	59e RARF	Lauter
163e RAP	Faulquemont, Metz	**South-East (Alps) Fortress**	
166e RAP	Sarre *(likely)*	154e RAP	Savoie, Dauphiné
		157e RAP	Alpes-Maritimes

III – Engineers *(scarlet[1] letters on black velvet title)*
Metz, Lauter, Haut-Rhin, Savoie, Dauphiné, Alpes-Maritimes, Bonifacio.

1. Gold letters for all NCOs (and officers, non-regulation)

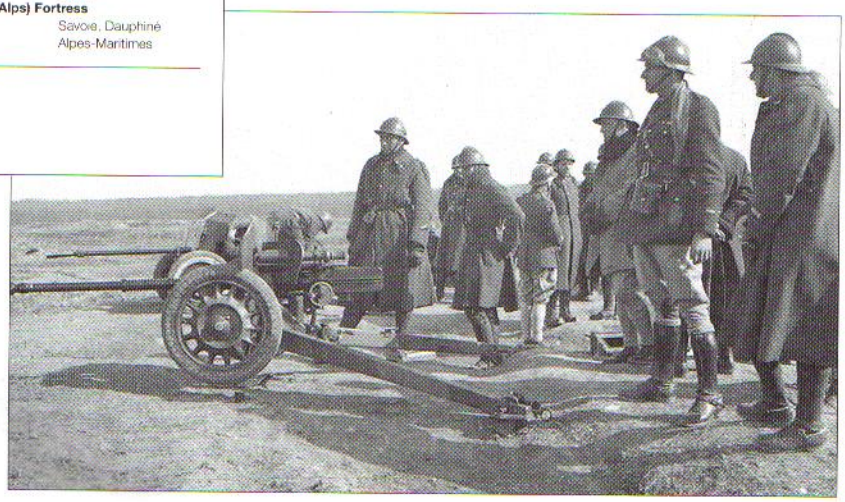
The wearing of tenues nos. 1 and 2 was suspended for the duration of the war on 12 October 1939.

A2: Sapper, 172e Régiment d'Infanterie de Forteresse, Strasbourg, 1939 Regarded as élite troops, in August 1935 fortress units received a khaki uniform, whose basic components were distributed to all other metropolitan troops shortly afterwards. Maginot Line units were, however, distinguished by three particular features: a small dark khaki beret with a badge bearing the motto *On ne passe pas* (made famous at Verdun in 1916), a dark khaki wool sash, and a shoulder title, worn on the left arm only, with the name of the unit's fortress zone (see Table VI). This man wears summer full dress, complete with his specialisation badge, the regimental yellow and green *fourragère* (the colours of the *Médaille Militaire*), and the white gauntlets that began to appear in the *têtes de colonne* and bands of many regiments of all arms-of-service in the pre-war period.

A3: Brigadier, Algerian spahis, full dress, Oran, 1939 This man is wearing the traditional full dress uniform, re-established in November 1927. The head-dress is the *guennour*, which consisted of three skull caps covered with a white *chèche*, all held by a long camel-hair cord. The jacket and waistcoat are garance red with sky blue piping and black braid and soutaches. The *tombo* on the jacket was coloured according to the regiment's recruiting area (garance for Algiers, white for Oran – shown here – jonquil yellow for Constantine and sky blue for Tunis), but the small sky blue patch on the cuff was the same for all regiments. Junior NCOs' badges were in jonquil yellow.

The wool sash, scarlet with white and blue binding tape along the edges, worn under the regulation belt, was the special African cavalry pattern (also worn by the chasseurs d'Afrique, remount and transport units in Africa). The large, sky blue, Turkish-style trousers (without separate legs), called *saroual*, were folded into 32 pleats around the waist. Two *burnous* were worn, one on top of the other: the inner was made of white wool, the outer, of garance serge.

The leggings, by regulation the standard cavalry pattern, were more usually (as here), of a pattern unique to the spahis in red-brown leather with a small loop at the front to secure



Two 25mm anti-tank guns of the 93e GRDI: the 1937 Puteaux in the foreground and the 1934 Hotchkiss to the rear. (Coll. R. Avignon)

the spurs. This man is also wearing 1917-pattern ankle boots with universal pattern spurs, and is armed with a curved 1822/82-pattern light cavalry sabre.

B1: Chef de bataillon, 92e RI, field dress, 1939-40 From January 1933 officers could combine the elements of their khaki uniforms in three different orders of dress: the smartest, day-time dress (*tenue de jour* – tenue no.3); working dress (*tenue de travail* – tenue no.4) and campaign dress (*tenue de campagne* – tenue no.5). The general rule was that officers should wear the same order of dress as their men. This meant that field dress included, whatever the season, a six-button 1932-pattern manteau worn over the *vareuse*. The *manteau* was supposed to be identical to that of mounted troops (see Plate D3): in practice, however, officers' collars were much more pointed, and the coat often included shoulder straps (as here). On khaki uniforms, rank badges were in 40mm long strips of braid, and decorations were worn as ribbons only.

The 1918-pattern *bonnet de police* should have carried rank badges only, but officers' caps were quite frequently decorated with dark khaki piping, and, more rarely, bore a circular cloth badge modelled on the collar patch. The fore-and-aft points of officers' caps were often more rounded than those of the men. Officers' leather equipment was made in a dark tan shade. Here, this man is wearing the 1918-pattern waistbelt with shoulder strap (inspired by the Sam Browne), an 1876/93-pattern holster, leather gloves, 1920-pattern leggings and 1919-pattern officers' boots. He is carrying a map case and an ANP31 gas mask. In the field, a stick often replaced the sabre as a mark of command.

B2: Patrol member, light field order, spring 1940 First formed during the Great War, groupes francs or corps francs (an early version of commandos) were small units, generally of platoon strength (30 to 40 men), composed of volunteers from their parent unit. When on patrol or when raiding, these men wore a reduced order, at first based around regulation items. However, from spring 1940, units began to receive the 1938-pattern cotton twill uniform, worn over the jersey and the uniform trousers. The new uniform consisted of a *veste-bourgeron* with five painted iron buttons, and a pair of *pantalon-salopettes* – a simplified version, in a lighter cloth, of the items of dress issued to motorised troops in 1935 (see Plate E1). Originally, this uniform was intended to replace the old working dress of unbleached or blue canvas, and to provide a cheap uniform for local defence units for wear over their civilian clothes. It soon became apparent, however, that this uniform was suitable for patrolling in no man's land. It was also distributed to the men of the CEFS in Norway, particularly to the Legion.

The helmet is under a cover, and the man wears a blue star on his upper left sleeve – both typical features of the dress of groupes francs. His pouches are 1916-pattern, and he is carrying OF and F1 grenades and the FM24/29 spare magazine haversack: the ANP31 gas mask has been left behind as a useless encumbrance. He is armed with the 1892 M16 carbine, and wears 1917-pattern boots.

B3: Chasseur à pied, field dress, 1939-40 This chasseur de 1re classe of the 2e BCP proudly wears the campaign uniform for BCPs and BCAs, as laid down in April 1935, for

This Alpine infantry groupe franc are equipped with regulation fur jackets of an old pattern (as worn by truck drivers), 1916-pattern trench knives and, more unusually, sub-machine guns: an Erma-Vollmer is clearly visible on the left, and the barrel and foresight of the little MAS38 can be seen in the hands of the man standing on the right. Two kinds of helmet cover (in light khaki cotton and in knitted wool) are being worn.

an inspection: his peacetime blues are partly hidden by his 1920-pattern *capote* with its unpolished dark khaki buttons, drawn from reserve magazines. The 1926-pattern helmet is khaki, as is the cloth which covers the water-bottle (out of sight on his right hip). In the chasseurs, the 1935-pattern shirt was dark blue with a black tie; the trousers are 'dark iron grey' (a colour made up of 95% dark blue and 5% unbleached wool) without any piping, as laid down in regulations, and the puttees, introduced in March 1936, are dark blue. Apart from the branch distinctions – the blue colour of some items, the helmet badge and the collar patches – the uniform is identical to that of the line infantry.

This man wears the new 1935-pattern equipment. The first sets issued were recognisable by the soft leather cartridge pouches with a narrow flap and long straps, introduced in 1936. These were not very practical, however, rapidly losing their shape, and were quickly replaced by the 1937-pattern, first issued in 1939 (see Plate C1). The rifle is the 1907/15 M16; the boots are the 1917-pattern.

C1: Tirailleur algérien, field dress, spring 1940 Unusually, this man has managed to acquire a single-breasted 1938-pattern *capote*, fastened with five large, 25mm diameter buttons (those on the double-breasted coat were 20mm) and security patches on the collar. He wears the coat with the 1938 'golf' trousers, which, in contrast, were widely available from the start of 1940.

In marching order, the helmet was hung from the belt and

the undress headgear worn instead. In this case, it is the crimson *chéchia* of the zouaves and tirailleurs beneath its cover, whilst the *chèche* (a scarf of thin cloth 2.5m long x 0.85m wide, standard for all African troops and for motorised troops) is tied around the neck in typical fashion. The equipment is the 1935 mod. 37-pattern, easily recognisable by the rigid cartridge pouches, with their deep flaps and short straps. The upper pack is heavily laden: the blanket, for want of space in the pack, has been rolled up and secured under the flap, whilst the lower pack, intended to be carried on company transport, is being worn, together with the ANP31 case and the 1935-pattern haversack. This is full marching order, described by regulations as 'exceptional', but, in fact, the usual lot of the *poilu* of 1939-40.

C2: Moroccan groupe franc, winter 1939-40 The *chèche* is wound around the head in a manner reminiscent of the Indian Army, common amongst Moroccan tirailleurs and in all the *spahi* regiments. Over his khaki *vareuse*, this man is wearing a sheepskin jerkin, widely distributed for outpost work during the winter of 1939-40. His trousers are the 1915/27-pattern for African infantry, baggier in cut than those issued to metropolitan troops, and a precursor of the golf trousers of 1938 (although the 1915/27 trousers featured an undyed canvas extension covering the calf, fastened with three buttons, hidden behind the puttees when worn). He is equipped with 1916-pattern pouches, and grenades, a 1916-pattern dagger, and standard khaki wool gloves. His sub-machine gun is the 9mm Erma-Vollmer parabellum. Stocks of this German weapon were seized in the summer of 1939 from the remnants of the Spanish Republican army, as it escaped across the Pyrenees. A large haul of weapons of all types was acquired in this way, including 3,250 Erma Vollmers and 1,540 extra magazines. These weapons were partly put into service in the French Army, where they were distributed to the groupes francs. Each weapon however, came with only one or two spare magazines (rather than the three called for by regulation), and without any special pouch.

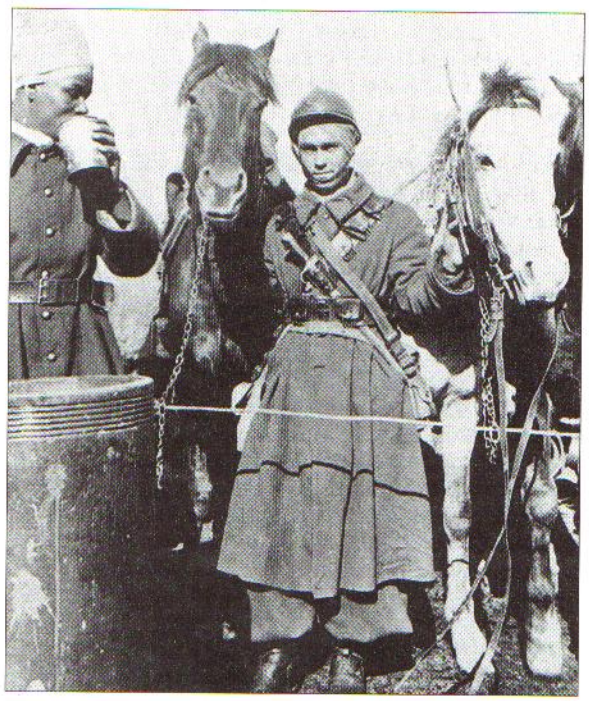
On his feet, this man is wearing regulation pattern rubber trench boots, which were large enough to be put on over the wearer's ankle boots. Their fit could be adjusted by the two strong rubberised straps on the sides.

C3: Tirailleur sénégalais, garrison dress, 1939-40 Colonial troops, whether European or locally-raised, did not wear the *vareuse* but the *paletot* – a tradition inherited from the Navy. Apart from being double-breasted, the *paletot* was distinguished from the *vareuse* by its cloth, which was softer and plusher, and also by its lack of cuffs. In addition, the *paletots* of Senegalese and Malagasy troops were decorated with jonquil yellow braid around the collar and on the sleeves. The scarlet wool sash (4.2m x 0.4m) was identical to that worn by North African tirailleurs and artillery. In campaign dress, it was worn beneath the other garments, but on other occasions (walking-out, in garrison, inspections, etc.) it was usually visible. The trousers are the special 1921/35-pattern for local Colonial forces. In outward appearance they were identical to the 1922 metropolitan troops' pattern, but in the Colonial version were cut shorter, to just below the knee. The *chéchia* is the same as that of North African troops. This man's equipment consists of 1916-pattern pouches, a 1907/15 M16 rifle, and boots similar to those of metropolitan troops, but in a wider fitting.

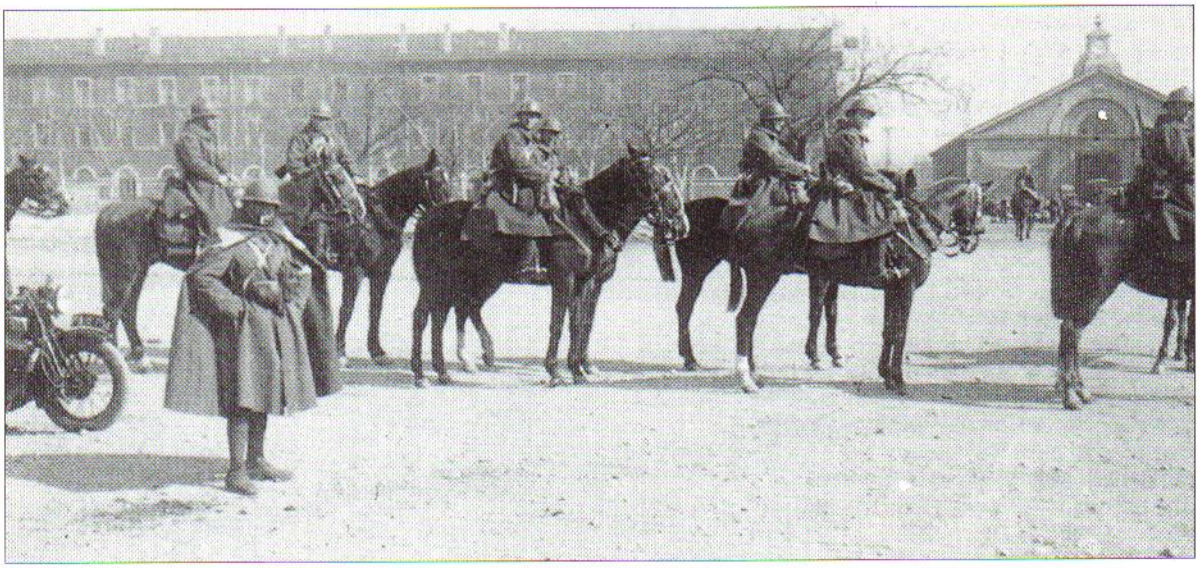
D1: Trooper, 6e *Dragons*, dismounted combat order, 1939-40 This soldier, already serving at the outbreak of war, has been issued with the piped 1920/35 *vareuse*, complete with tin buttons. His equipment is the 1916-pattern, complete with a bandolier for dismounted action, normally carried around the horse's neck. This is the 1918-pattern with nine pouches each holding two clips of five rounds each; the 1929-pattern had two sets of three pouches, each holding 15 rounds of 7.5mm ammunition. He has also removed one of the saddle-bags, which he is carrying on his back, thanks to a system of straps. His helmet is the 1926 universal pattern.

His breeches are the 1933 cavalry pattern, with reinforced patches on the inside of the leg, worn by mounted troops from all arms-of-service. As an aid to marching, his 1921-pattern riders' leggings, by comparison with older patterns, were shorter in length, and did not extend over the top of the foot. He is wearing universal pattern spurs and 1917 ankle boots.

The modern MAS36 rifle was issued as a priority to regular army cavalry units, in view of their wartime role as a covering force on the frontier to protect full mobilisation in the interior. All metropolitan cavalry regiments, as well as some GRDIs and GRCAs, were thus equipped with the new rifle. It must be stressed that there was no co-ordination between the issue of new weapons and that of new equipment; the



A spahi of the 2e RSM (3e Spahi Brigade), in the Ardennes, 9th February 1940. This man wears the 1920 pattern six-button cavalry manteau with security patches added on the collar. The belt strap of the gas mask case is clearly visible. The helmet, a 1915 Adrian with a crescent badge, is worn on top of a chèche worn as a turban. Arriving from Algeria in November 1939, the regiments of the 3e Brigade were equipped with the 1892 M16 carbine, and so carry their bayonets on their bandoliers.



The 41e GRDI leaving for the front, Lyon, March 1940. This photo, although of rather poor quality, is very evocative of the 'horse and horse-power' mix of most of the reconnaissance groups. In the foreground, an NCO wears a cape (issued to side-car personnel), whilst in the background the troopers wear the *manteau*.

cavalry continued to wear 1916 pouches, but often carried the up-to-date MAS36, whilst many infantry regiments wore the new 1935 equipment with old 8mm weapons (see Plates B3 and C1).

D2: Brigadier, 4e Spahis Marocains, winter field dress, 1939-40 This man is wearing his *chèche* Indian-style, with the blue **burnous** (the white *burnous* was not worn on campaign against a European enemy) and an ORs' 1920/35 *manteau* (see Plate D3). Over the *manteau* he is wearing the characteristic *gandourah*, a roomy Arab shirt, made from twill. This garment was worn all year round by *spahis* and some other African units. Rank badges were worn on a cloth patch attached to the chest.

His equipment consists of a cartridge belt and bandolier/bayonet carrier in red cross-lined leather. This was originally issued to Saharan units only, but its use was extended to the spahis in the 1920s. It was modified in 1935 to accommodate clips of five rounds instead of the three-round clips used with the 1892 carbine. In the spahi brigades that were issued with the MAS36 (the 1re and 2e, both stationed in France before the outbreak of war), the bayonet frog was empty. The 1915 spahi trousers, whilst of fairly ample cut, had separate legs and were not pleated at the waist. Leggings, boots and spurs are identical to those shown in Plate A3. The 1926 helmet, with its crescent badge, is covered by a *chèche*, rolled in a fashion unique to the 4e.

D3: Mounted artilleryman, winter 1939-40 This *brigadier-chef* is wearing the 1926-pattern helmet with the crossed barrels and grenade badge of the artillery, and the 1920/35 mounted man's *manteau* (here with buttons painted with dark khaki matt paint and no shoulder straps, suggesting that it has been drawn from reserve stocks). This coat was much roomier than the infantry *capote*, and included a long buttoned vent at the back to allow the wearer to ride a horse. The *manteau* did not have pockets, but nearly vertical slits in the skirts gave access to the pockets in the vareuse or trousers.

The collar patches are those of a divisional artillery regiment, the 36e, and the rank badges are the 'subdued' version of field dress. The badge on this man's sleeve is that of a farrier (*maréchal-ferrant*). He is wearing the equipment of a mounted man – the 1903/14 waistbelt, a 1915 simplified pattern holster, and a sword belt loop (which was worn only when dismounted; normally the sword and loop were carried on the saddle). He is wearing breeches, 1916-pattern leggings, spurs and ankle boots. He is carrying a regulation pattern canvas bucket.

E1: Cavalry AFV crew, campaign dress 1939-40 All cavalry AFV crews, regardless of the type of AFV they manned, wore the same uniform with the appropriate badge on their 1935-pattern motorised troops' helmet; in the case of the cuirassiers and dragoons, the helmet badge featured a grenade, while the men of the Armoured Car branch (GAM/RAM), as here, wore the head of Minerva on a sunburst.

AFV crews wore the standard uniform beneath a set of the 1935-pattern overalls, made in a heavy red-brown canvas. The canvas jacket was similar in cut to the *vareuse*, but carried five dark khaki uniform buttons, and included a removable khaki cloth lining. The collar patches (here with the violet piping of the GAMs/RAMs) and the rank badges were detachable. The 1935-pattern *salopettes* had two patch pockets on the thighs, and slits on each side, allowing access to the pockets of the uniform trousers. From 1937, these items were made in khaki, rather than red-brown, canvas; and, from February 1939, the trousers were stamped with a grenade marking on the upper leg, whilst the jacket was stamped with a similar grenade high up on the right sleeve.

This man is also wearing the 1935-pattern gloves and goggles for motorised troops. Around his neck is the regu-

lation 1938-pattern neck warmer in khaki wool, which replaced the *chèche* in winter (see Plate E2). His equipment still consists of the old 1903/14-pattern belt, with a 1916 pistol holster. His boots are those introduced in 1917.

E2: Captain, Chars de Combat, field dress 1939-40 This man wears a helmet identical to that shown in Plate E1, but here with the badge changed to the crossed gun barrels and helmet of the Tank units.

Tank crews received most of the items in the new motorised troops' canvas uniform when they were introduced in 1935. However, they retained their leather jacket, partly out of tradition, but also because it afforded better protection against fire. The 1920-pattern double-breasted jacket, in black leather with a black cloth collar, was replaced in 1935 by the pattern shown here. This was made entirely from brown leather, including the collar, and it was fastened by five flat ivory-nut buttons. Rank badges, in silver braid (here, those of a captain) were placed on a patch of dark blue/black or khaki cloth. The collar patches were often omitted on the brown leather jacket.

Like their men, officers wore the standard uniform underneath these special items of clothing. When actually serving in their tank, officers wore the *salopettes*, but, when on foot like this officer, they were abandoned in favour of fawn breeches. In theory, the puttees should have been of khaki cloth, like those of Other Ranks, but frequently officers wore them in shades of fawn to match their breeches.

This man wears the regulation *chèche*, an officers'-pattern belt, gloves and boots, all with a dark tan finish (see Plate B1). His pistol holster is the elegant, although old fashioned, 1876/93-pattern.

This trooper of the 2e RDP is a lorried rifleman: he has the standard helmet, the modified 1934 infantry equipment, the 1920/35 cavalry *manteau* and the 1935 hooded cape, a large sleeveless type of chasseur alpin pattern, but in khaki. Other items specific to motorised troops are the 1935 pattern goggles and the 1938 neck warmer.

E3: Cavalry motorcyclist, 11e GRCA, campaign dress 1939-40 This trooper wears the helmet shown in E1, but with a grenade badge, and the gloves, goggles and *chèche* shown in E1 and E2. The uniform adopted in 1935, which consisted of a long, light canvas coat with removable lining, was considered impractical by cavalry motorcycle units: it was not waterproof, for example. They therefore developed better patterns which were finally adopted in July 1938. The new uniform was made from a more densely woven and waterproof khaki canvas. It consisted of a double-breasted jacket, *salopettes* and a fur under-jacket. The jacket was roomy and smartly cut, with raglan sleeves; it was closed by two rows of five ivory-nut buttons, and included a removable lining in khaki cloth. A new feature was to move the arm-of-service patches from the collar to the upper sleeve, allowing the rider to turn up his collar for warmth, without concealing the patches. Most of the 1938-pattern jackets worn in 1939-40 also included security patches, adopted as a general measure in April 1939. Rank badges were worn on the sleeves as per regulation. The 1938-pattern *salopettes* were basically of the same cut as the 1935 pattern, but incorporated a fly front, and wide reinforcements on the inside of the thighs. This man's personal equipment is the 1916-pattern, with 1917-pattern boots, and here hidden under the over-trousers, 1921-pattern leggings. He is armed with the 1892 M16 carbine.

F1: Chasseur alpin, Norway Expedition, reduced field order, 1940 The six battalions of chasseurs alpins in General Béthouart's High Mountain Brigade (BHM) were equipped entirely with the up-to-date Pourchier clothing system. The 1940-pattern anorak was made from the same waterproofed khaki canvas as the 1938-pattern motorised troops' jacket, with ivory-nut buttons, ventilation holes beneath the armpits, a removable hood, and security patches on the collar. Like the 1935-pattern shirt, the anorak did not open all the way down the front, but was put on over the head. Since the Expeditionary Force was put together in a hurry, the uniform issued to the BHM was, with the exception of the dark blue alpine beret, entirely in khaki, which ran counter to all the traditions of the chasseurs. Béthouart declared that, '[the chasseur's] heart will remain blue', and managed at least to obtain collar patches and rank badges in jonquil yellow on a dark blue backing.

The trousers were usually the 1938 golf pattern or, more rarely, the 1940 skiers' pattern (which had exactly the same outward appearance). These were worn with 1940-pattern

En route to Narvik, the chasseurs alpins of the 27e Demi-Brigade called at Glasgow on 12 May 1940, when this photo was taken. A lone chasseur guards the Bergen rucksacks of his comrades. The well-known canadienne was simply the 1938 pattern fur under-jacket worn by motorcyclists with a fleece collar added.

skiers' gaiters in khaki canvas, and the high quality 1940-pattern waterproof sealskin mountain boots. This man is wearing 1937 cartridge pouches without braces. The typical *canadienne* was normally kept strapped on the outside of the pack, ready for wear.

F2: Légionnaire, 13e DBLE, Norway, 1940 The two battalions of the 13e Demi-Brigade de Légion Etrangère (DBLE) were issued with a uniform similar to that worn by the chasseurs of the BHM. However, several of the specialised items worn by the chasseurs were unavailable, and were replaced instead by other, more standard, garments. This was often the case with the boots, where the 1917 ankle boots replaced the 1940-pattern mountain boots; the 1938 *veste-bourgeron* (see Plate B2) was worn instead of the skiers' anorak, and puttees instead of skiers' gaiters. The standard firearm was the MAS36, but the pouches were the 1916-pattern. Nevertheless, the heavy rolled-down socks (for details, see Plate F3) and the 1935 fortress troops' beret gave the men of the 13e DBLE the look of mountain troops. Their cold weather equipment was identical to that issued to the chasseurs, particularly the *canadienne*, the 1940-pattern waterproof reversible kagoule (khaki on one side, white on the other), the white helmet cover for the 1926 steel helmet and the sheepskin gloves.

F3: Ski scout, Army of the Alps, 1939 From the mid-1930s each alpine infantry unit formed its own small élite unit, the SES (*section d'éclaireurs-skieurs*). Each RIA normally raised three, whilst each BCA and BAF raised one. Within these units, the men of the SES were the only troops skilled in skiing and mountain climbing.

In addition to the standard uniform (dark blue for the BCAs, khaki for the others), the skiers each received a complete set of high mountain gear, whose main item was either a light khaki anorak, usually with chest pockets, which predated the 1940-pattern (see Plate F1), or a heavy canvas jacket, the *windjack*, shown here. Both anorak and windjack were civilian garments, so there were many variations in style. Instead of puttees, skiers wore footless socks in khaki wool (dark blue for the BCAs), whilst heavy grey-white oiled wool socks were rolled over the top of the boots to prevent the snow getting in. The boots were the 1935 skiers' pattern; the goggles were the regulation type, introduced in the 1920s. The skis were made from hickory wood, and the poles from aluminium. The large mountain pack was of the standard pattern for skiers, and included a special compartment for the 1892 M16 carbine, which left only the butt and muzzle free.

This skier belongs to the 159e RIA at Briançon. The garance grenade on his beret was used by all RIAs, and the dark blue star (jonquil yellow in the BCAs) was, by tradition, the scout's badge.

G1: Corporal, 24e Régiment Mixte d'Infanterie Coloniale, the Levant, 1940 This curious-looking uniform is accurate for Colonial troops in North Africa and the Levant. The 1920-pattern *capote* was identical to that worn by metropolitan infantry, but in walking-out dress (shown here) included domed buttons with an anchor device, and distinctive braid, embroidered in scarlet on a narrow dark blue/black backing, and arranged in a chevron at an angle of 55°. The standard equipment was composed entirely of older patterns.

What makes the uniform look strange is the combination of capote, 1931-pattern sun helmet (with the tombac anchor badge of Colonial troops) and shorts. The latter formed part of the lightweight summer order adopted in 1937 for the European and Indochinese troops of Colonial regiments. It included a short-sleeved shirt (see Plate H1) and shorts with two pockets, a tightening strap on each hip, and five loops to hold a special-pattern belt, 30mm wide and of natural leather. Senegalese troops wore shorts of a simplified pattern (from 1932), and a short-sleeved shirt without a collar (1934-pattern). Nevertheless, Senegalese troops serving in the Levant in 1937 received the same lightweight uniform as the Europeans.

G2: Lieutenant, 5e Régiment Etranger d'Infanterie, Tonkin, field dress, 1941 Legion units that were stationed in areas where they were likely to serve alongside Colonial units had a tendency to copy styles from the latter's uniform. This was the case in Indochina, where the 5e REI decorated their sun helmet with a gilt Legion grenade. The remainder of this young lieutenant's uniform is regulation, and was worn by all officers serving in hot climates, no matter what their arm-of-service. The *vareuse* and trousers, made in light khaki cotton for summer wear, were of the same cut as the uniforms of metropolitan troops, who were only authorised to wear the cotton uniform in summer, but not as campaign dress. The open collar of the officers' *vareuse* was only introduced slowly: it was authorised for the cotton uniform of colonial troops in April 1935, and then for all metropolitan troops serving in hot climates (which of course included the Legion) in June 1936. In May 1938, its use was extended still further to cover all uniforms, serge or cotton, worn anywhere. The shape of the collar continued to evolve until February 1939, when the bottom point of the old diamond-shaped pattern was trimmed to give the modern narrow pentagon shape (sadly abolished in 1991).

G3: Sergeant, 1er Zouaves, Algiers, 1935-42 This uniform in light khaki cotton was worn in summer by the privates and junior NCOs of all units stationed in North Africa and the Levant. It was never worn in mainland France, except under special circumstances, as for example at the 1939 Bastille Day Parade in Paris. The cotton *vareuse* was identical in cut to the cloth version, but minus the cuffs, and with two belt loops added. Collar patches and rank badges (here those of a sergeant doing his national service) were detachable, fixed with hooks and eyes. The yellow and green *fourragère* of the 1er RZ is worn in walking-out dress style, attached to the second chest button. The trousers were likewise of the same cut as the cloth pattern of 1915/27 (for details, see Plate C2). In full dress, the skirts of the vareuse were tucked into the trousers and hidden under a wool sash, in blue for European troops (zouaves, African Light Infantry, Légion Etrangère, engineers and services). The *chéchia*, which was normally worn without a badge, here has a small crescent and the regimental number in metal – the sort of non-regulation features in which a sergeant could indulge. His equipment is regulation, if old in pattern, with a 1907/15 M16 rifle, khaki puttees and 1917 boots.

H1: Colonial infantry, Madagascar, 1942 This *marsouin* (the nickname of the colonial infantryman – from an old French word for a dolphin), in combat order is wearing the 1937 lightweight summer dress (see also G1) and is typical of the troops facing the British invasion of 1942. The short-sleeved shirt includes shoulder straps and pockets. Like the 1935-pattern, the shirt only opens halfway down the chest, and must be put on over the wearer's head. As a machine gunner, this man should only have carried his FM24/29, but he is wearing a 1916 pistol holster on his belt with two 1916 pouches (one in the small of his back). He is also carrying the 1924 haversack, which could hold six spare magazines, over his shoulders. His 1926 helmet has the 1937-pattern anchor badge (displayed on a disc rather than attached direct to the helmet); he has regulation khaki puttees and 1917 boots.

H2: *Adjudant-chef*, cavalry, Southern France, 1942 The sports shirt and shorts of the 1941 PT kit matched the cloth uniform, so that the shirt could be worn with the 1938 golf trousers for drill order in summer without looking out of place,

BELOW LEFT **Officers and NCOs of the 3rd Company of the 1/24e RMIC, in the Levant, towards end of 1940. Here we can see an amazing mixture of officers' lightweight sand coloured vareuses, with every possible pattern of collar (for details see Plate G2), and dark blue/black collar patches with anchors embroidered in gold wire. The men kneeling wear non-regulation khaki shirts. The two NCOs on the right wear the double-breasted khaki *paletot* and the side-cap with rank badges.**

RIGHT **The colour party of the 10e Régiment de Tirailleurs Sénégalais at Bizerta (Tunisia) in 1937, wearing the sand coloured cotton uniform. The officer wears the uniform described in G2. The ORs wear a cotton *paletot* with an upright collar for Europeans (the caporal-chef on the right), or without a collar for the Senegalese. The collar patches were dark blue. A *paletot* with a stand-and-fall collar, almost identical to the *vareuse* of the summer uniform of African troops (see G3), was issued to Europeans in colonial units in July 1938.**

and gave the 'New Army' a fashionably young and sporty look. The badge on the shirt bears the dark blue five-pointed star of the cavalry.

A platoon commander, this *adjudant-chef* is armed with a PM38 sub-machine gun, although his men would normally carry the MAS36 rifle. Although a man of his rank would normally wear officers' uniform, he is wearing ORs' trousers and puttees, a practice that became common after 1940. Only his boots, the 1919/41 officers' pattern made from a thick leather with a non-shine natural finish, are 'correct'.

Several cavalry regiments of the Army of the Armistice, whether on horseback or on bicycle, wore the 1935 helmet with its padded band. Troopers also wore the 1935 mod.37 equipment, which had eventually been issued to the cavalry. Here, however, this man wears an officers' belt with a sub-machine gun magazine attached to the shoulder strap.

H3: Infantry, Vichy, summer 1942 In October 1940, it was decided to clothe all of the Army of the Armistice in a modern campaign dress, with a canvas anorak, of the type worn by the Norway Expeditionary Force. This plan had to be abandoned because of a shortage of cotton, and instead a new cloth uniform was adopted, capable of being worn either in the field or for walking-out. The 1941-pattern *vareuse* had four pockets, an open collar, epaulette straps and cuffs fastened by two buttons. The 1941-pattern trousers had straight legs and on campaign were tucked into thick leather gaiters similar to those of mounted troops, but notably shorter. For the first time in the French Army, the ORs' boots were Derby style and had stiff toe-caps. The new uniform also included a shirt, similar to the 1935-pattern, but with shoulder straps, a new *bonnet de police*, and a new *capote*. Mounted troops were given new pattern breeches, a better fitting *manteau* and new leggings which included a gusset to fit over the tops of the boots. The collars of the *vareuse*, *capote* and *manteau* were more tapered and so the patches too were more pointed. The distinctive colours of the line infantry were altered in July 1942, when the dark blue figures and soutaches were replaced by garance. Scarcely any sets of the 1941 uniform had been issued by November 1942; only a few units, such as the 150e RI shown here, had received it.

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Notes sur les planches en couleur

A1 Colonel, 1er Régiment de Dragons Portés, 1938 Le colonel Keime en grande tenue (tenue no. 1) modèle 1931. Le port des tenues no. 1 et 2 fut suspendu pendant la guerre à partir du 12 octobre 1939. **A2** Sapeur, 172e Régiment d'Infanterie de Forteresse, Strasbourg, 1939 en tenue d'été, avec son insigne de spécialité, la fourragère régimentaire jaune et verte (les couleurs de la Médaille Militaire), et les gants blancs à crispin. **A3** Brigadier, Spahis algériens, grande tenue, Oran, 1939 Cet homme porte la grande tenue traditionnelle, remise en service en novembre 1927.

B1 Chef de bataillon, 92e RI, tenue de campagne, 1939-40 avec le centurion-baudrier modèle 1918, l'étui modèle 1876/93, des gants de cuir, des jambières modèle 1920 et des brodequins d'officier modèle 1919. **B2** Patrouilleur d'un franc, ordre de campagne léger, printemps 1940. Lorsqu'ils étaient en patrouille ou en raid, ces hommes portaient un ordre réduit. **B3** Chasseur à pied, tenue de campagne, 1939-40 avec la première version du nouveau matériel de modèle 1935, reconnaissable par les cartouchières en cuir souple avec leur rabat étroit et leur longue sangle, introduites en 1936.

C1 Tirailleur algérien, tenue de campagne, printemps 1940 Il s'agit de l'ordre de marche au complet, décrit par le règlement comme "exceptionnel" mais qui était en réalité le lot habituel du poilu de 1939-40. **C2** Groupe Franc marocain, hiver 1939-40 Ils portent leur chèche autour de la tête, un peu comme les soldats de l'armée indienne, comme c'était souvent le cas parmi les tirailleurs marocains et dans tous les régiments de spahis. **C3** Tirailleur sénégalais, tenue de garnison, 1939-40 Les troupes coloniales, européennes ou levées sur place, ne portaient pas la vareuse mais le paletot, tradition héritée de la Marine.

D1 Simple soldat, 6e Régiment de Dragons, ordre de combat démonté, 1939-40. Ce soldat a reçu la vareuse passepoilée 1920/35, avec boutons en fer-blanc et matériel modèle 1916. **D2** Brigadier, 4e Régiment de Spahis marocains, tenue de campagne d'hiver, 1939-40. Cet homme porte sa chèche dans le style indien, un manteau OR 1920/35 (voir la planche D3) et par-dessus le manteau il porte la gandoura caractéristique. **D3** Soldat d'artillerie montée, hiver 1939-40. Ce brigadier-chef porte un casque modèle 1926, orné du badge de l'artillerie (barils croisés et grenade) et le manteau du soldat monté 1920/35.

E1 Equipage de cavalerie AVF, tenue de campagne 1939-40 Tous les équipages de cavalerie AVF portaient le même uniforme avec le badge approprié sur leur casque pour troupes portées modèle 1935. **E2** Capitaine, Chars de combat, tenue de campagne 1939-40 Cet homme porte la chèche réglementaire, une ceinture, des gants et des bottes d'officier, tous marron foncé (voir la Planche B1). **E3** Motocycliste de cavalerie, 11e GRCA, tenue de campagne 1939-40 Le matériel personnel de cet homme est du modèle 1916, avec des bottes modèle 1917. Il est armé de la carabine 1892 M16.

F1 Chasseur Alpin, Expédition de Norvège, ordre de campagne simplifié, 1940 équipé entièrement du système vestimentaire Pourchier à la pointe du progrès. **F2** Légionnaire, 13e DBLE, Norvège, 1940 Leur matériel pour temps froids était identique à celui qui était distribué aux chasseurs, en particulier la canadienne. **F3** Eclaireur à skis, Armée des Alpes, 1939. Ce skieur appartient au 159e RIA de Briançon. La grenade garance sur son béret était utilisée par tous les RIA et l'étoile bleu foncée était traditionnellement le badge des éclaireurs.

G1 Caporal, 24e Régiment Mixte d'Infanterie Coloniale, le Levant, 1940 Le mélange de capote, casque de soleil modèle 1931 (avec le badge d"ancre en tombac des troupes coloniales) et shorts est bizarre. **G2** Lieutenant, 5e Régiment Etranger d'Infanterie, Tonkin, tenue de campagne, 1941 Les unités de la légion stationnées dans les zones où elles risquaient de servir avec des unités coloniales copiaient souvent le style de l'uniforme de ces dernières. Le reste de l'uniforme de ce jeune lieutenant est réglementaire. **G3** Sergent, 1er Régiment de Zouaves, Alger, 1935-42 Cet uniforme en coton kaki léger était porté en été par les simples soldats et les sous-officiers junior de toutes les unités stationnées en Afrique du Nord et dans le Levant.

H1 Infanterie coloniale, Madagascar, 1942 Ce marsouin en ordre de combat porte la tenue d'été légère de 1937 (voir également G1) et est représentatif des troupes qui firent face à l'invasion britannique de 1942. **H2** Adjudant-chef, cavalerie, sud de la France, 1942 La chemise et le short de sport du fourniment du PT 1941 étaient assortis à l'uniforme en drap. Le badge sur la chemise porte l'étoile bleu foncé à cinq branches de la cavalerie. **H3** Infanterie, Vichy, été 1942 En octobre 1940, on décida d'habiller toute l'armée de l'Armistice en tenue de campagne moderne. Pratiquement aucun des uniformes modèle 1941 avaient été distribués en novembre 1942. Seules quelques unités, comme la 150e RI illustrée ici, l'avaient reçu.

Farbtafeln

A1 Oberst, 1er Régiment de Dragons Portés, 1938. Der Befehlshaber Oberst Keime in der Galauniform Modell 1931 (*tenue no. 1*). Das Tragen der *tenues nos.* 1 und 2 wurde am 12. Oktober 1939 für die Dauer des Krieges ausgesetzt. **A2** Pionier, 172e Régiment d'Infanterie de Forteresse, Straßburg, 1939. Dieser Soldat trägt die Sommergalauniform mit seinem Waffengattungsabzeichen, das einen Futterwagen in den Regimentsfarben grün und gelb zeigt, - (die Farben der Médaille Militaire) - und weiße Stulpenhandschuhe. **A3** Brigadier, algerische Spahis, Galauniform, Oran, 1939. Dieser Soldat trägt die traditionelle Galauniform, die im November 1927 wieder eingeführt worden war.

B1 Bataillonsführer, 92e RI, Feldanzug, 1939-40. Dieser Soldat trägt das Koppel mit Schulterriemen des Modells 1918, die Pistolentasche Modell 1876/93, Lederhandschuhe, Leggings des Modells 1920 und Offizierssstiefel des Modells 1919. **B2** Mitglied der Patrouille, leichte Kampfordnung, Frühjahr 1940. Auf Patrouillegängen oder bei Überfällen trugen diese Soldaten eine reduzierte Ausrüstung. **B3** Chasseur à pied, Feldanzug, 1939-40. Dieser Soldat trägt die neu ausgegebene Ausrüstung des Modells 1935, die durch die Patronentaschen aus weichem Leder erkenntlich ist, die eine schmale Lasche und lange Riemen aufweisen, eine Form, die 1936 eingeführt wurde.

C1 Tirailleur algérien, Feldanzug, Frühjahr 1940. Abgebildet ist die volle Marschordnung, die in den Vorschriften zwar als 'außergewöhnlich' bezeichnet wird, in Wirklichkeit aber allgemein von den *Poilu* 1939-40 getragen werden mußte. **C2** Marokkanische Groupe Franc, Winter 1939-40. Die *chèche* ist auf eine Art und Weise um den Kopf gewickelt, die an die indische Armee erinnert. Dies war bei den marokkanischen tirailleurs sowie bei allen Spahis-Regimentern gang und gäbe. **C3** Tirailleur sénégalais, Garnisonsanzug, 1939-40. Die Kolonialtruppen, sowohl die europäischen als auch die vor Ort zusammengestellten, trugen nicht die Joppe, sondern den *paletot*, eine Tradition, die von der Marine übernommen wurde.

D1 Einfacher Soldat, 6e Régiment de Dragons, Gefechtsordnung wenn nicht zu Pferde, 1939-40. Dieser Soldat wurde mit der paspelierten Joppe des Modells 1920/35 mit Blechknöpfen ausgestattet und weist die Ausrüstung des Modells 1916 auf. **D2** Brigadier, 4e Régiment de Spahis Marocains, Winterfeldanzug. 1939-40. Dieser Soldat trägt seine *chèche* nach indischem Muster, den Mantel eines ORs 1920/35 (vergl. Farbtafel D3), und über dem Mantel trägt er das typische *gandourah*. **D3** Berittener Artillerist, Winter 1939-40. Dieser Brigadeführer trägt den Helm des Modells 1926 mit dem Abzeichen der Artillerie, das überkreuzte Gewehrläufe und eine Granate zeigt, sowie den Mantel des Modells 1920/35 für berittene Soldaten.

E1 AFV-Mannschaft der Kavallerie, Feldanzug, 1939-40. Alle AFV-Mannschaften der Kavallerie trugen die gleiche Uniform, jeweils mit dem entsprechenden Abzeichen auf dem Helm des Modells 1935 für die motorisierte Truppe. **E2** Hauptmann, Chars de combat, Feldanzug, 1939-40. Dieser Soldat trägt die reguläre *chèche*, ein Offizierskoppel, Handschuhe und Stiefel, die alle dunkelbraun sind (vergl. Farbtafel B1). **E3** Motorradfahrer der Kavallerie, 11e GRCA, Feldanzug 1939-40. Die persönliche Ausrüstung dieses Soldaten entspricht dem Modell 1916, die Stiefel dem Modell 1917. Er ist mit dem 1892er M16-Karabiner bewaffnet.

F1 Chasseur alpin, Norwegen-Expedition, reduzierte Kampfordnung, 1940. Dieser Soldat ist vollständig nach dem aktuellen Pourchier-Kleidungssystem ausgestattet. **F2** Légionnaire, 13e DBLE, Norwegen, 1940. Die Kaltwetterausrüstung dieser Soldaten entsprach genau der der Jäger, insbesondere was den Dufflecoat betrifft. **F3** Ski-Späher, Alpenheer, 1939. Dieser Skifahrer gehört zur 159e RIA bei Briançon. Die krapprote Granate auf seinem Barett war allen RIAs gemein, und der dunkelblaue Stern war traditionsgemäß das Abzeichen der Späher.

G1 Korporal, 24e Régiment Mixte d'Infanterie Coloniale, die Levante, 1940. Die Kombination von Soldatenmantel mit Kapuze, Sonnenhelm des Modells 1931 (mit dem Tombak-Anker-Abzeichen der Kolonialtruppen) und kurzen Hosen sieht recht merkwürdig aus. **G2** Leutnant, 5e Régiment Etranger d'Infanterie, Tonkin, Feldanzug, 1941. Einheiten der Legion, die in Gebieten stationiert waren, wo anzunehmen war, daß sie an der Seite von Kolonialeinheiten Dienst tun würden, hatten die Angewohnheit, gewisse Stilelemente der Uniformen letzterer zu übernehmen. **G3** Unteroffizier, 1er Régiment de Zouaves, Algiers, 1935-42. Diese Uniform aus hell-khaki Baumwolle wurde im Sommer von den Gefreiten und jüngeren Unteroffizieren aller Einheiten getragen, die in Nordafrika und in der Levante stationiert waren.

H1 Kolonialinfanterie, Madagaskar, 1942. Dieser *marsouin* in Kampfordnung trägt die leichte Sommeruniform des Modells 1937 (vergl. auch G1) und ist ein typisches Beispiel für die Truppen, die 1942 der britischen Invasion gegenüberstanden. **H2** Adjutant-chef, Kavallerie, Südfrankreich, 1942. Das Sporthemd und die kurzen Hosen der PT-Ausstattung des Modells 1941 paßten zu der Stoffuniform. Das Abzeichen auf dem Hemd zeigt den dunkelblauen, fünfeckigen Stern der Kavallerie. **H3** Infanterie, Vichy, Sommer 1942. Im Oktober 1940 wurde beschlossen, die gesamte Armee in moderne Felduniformen zu kleiden. Bis November 1942 war die Uniform des Modells 1941 jedoch kaum ausgegeben worden, und nur einige wenige Einheiten, wie die hier abgebildete 150e RI hatten die Uniform erhalten.